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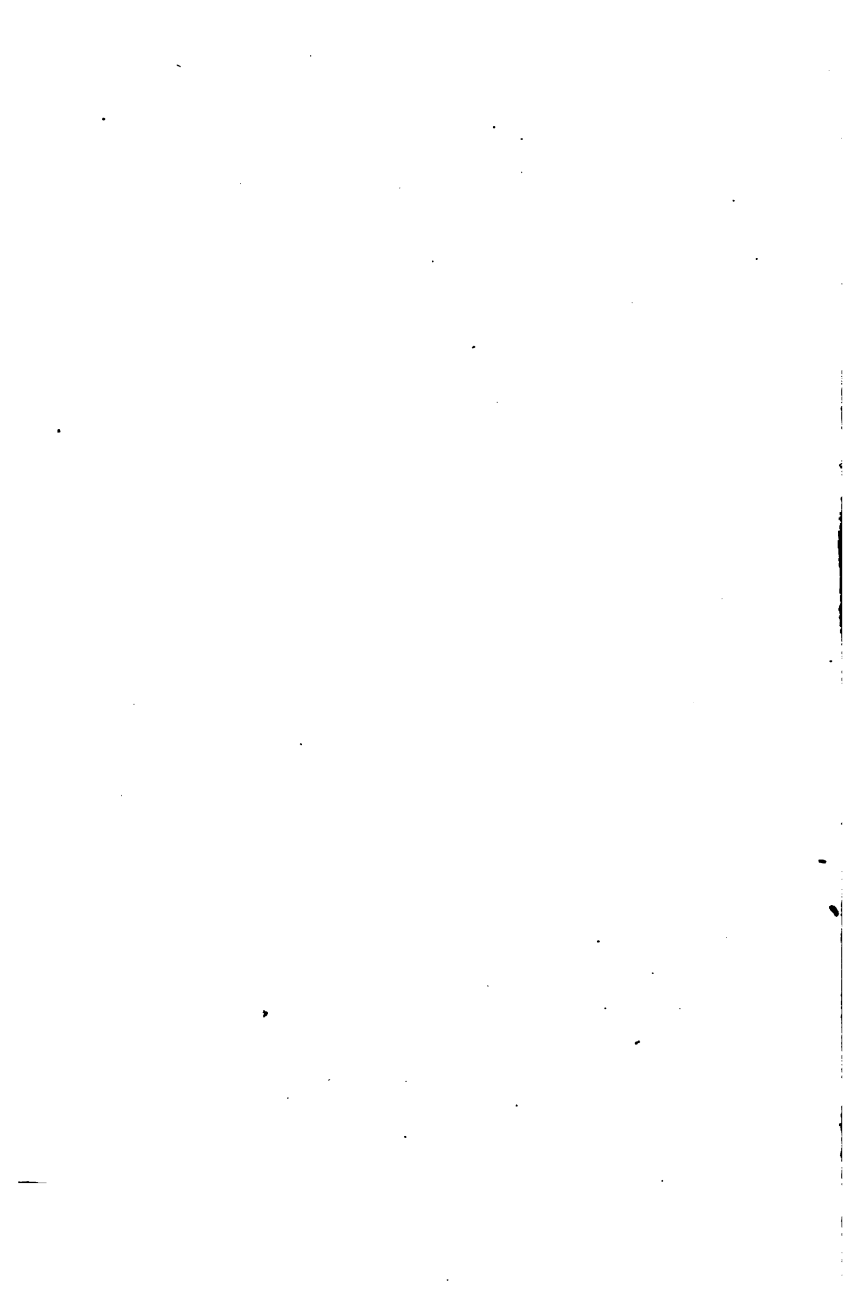
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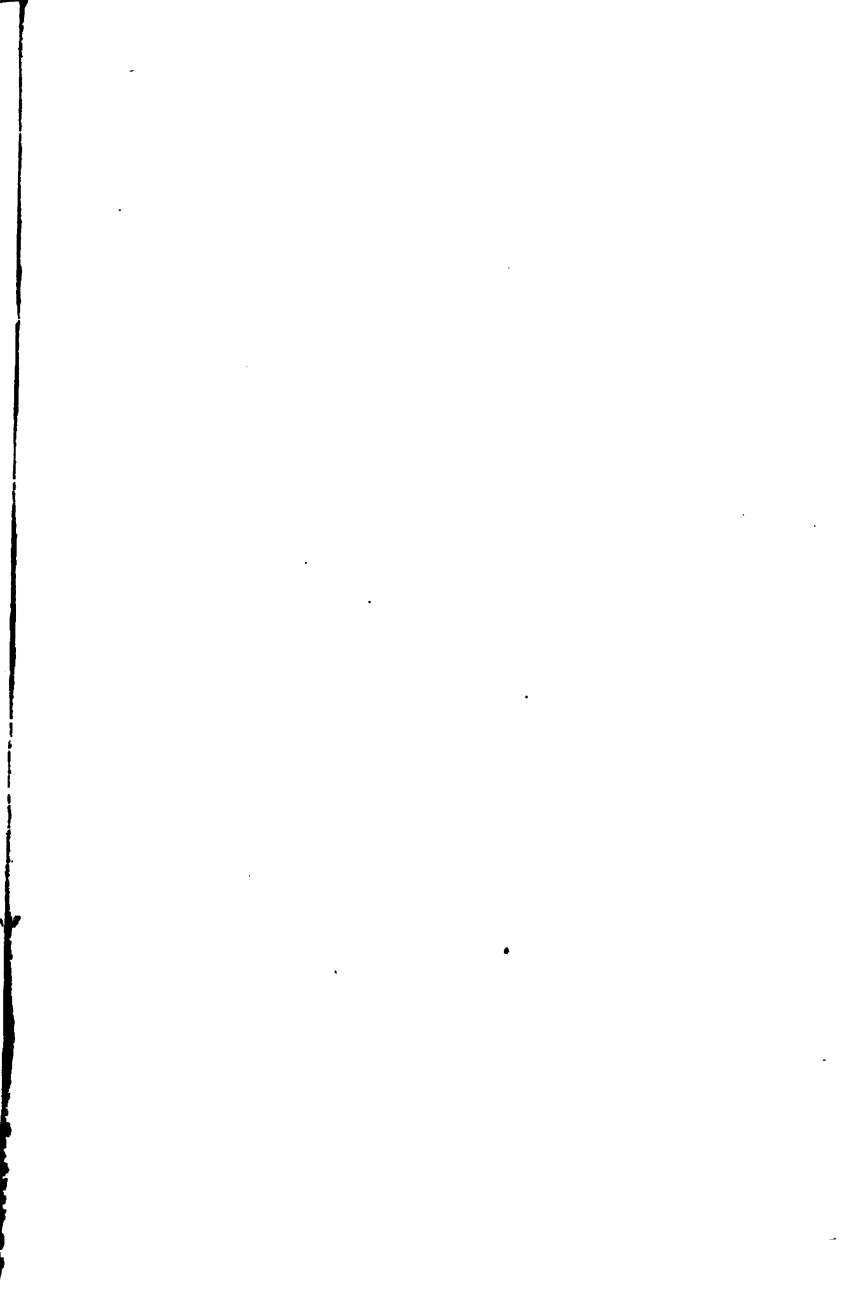


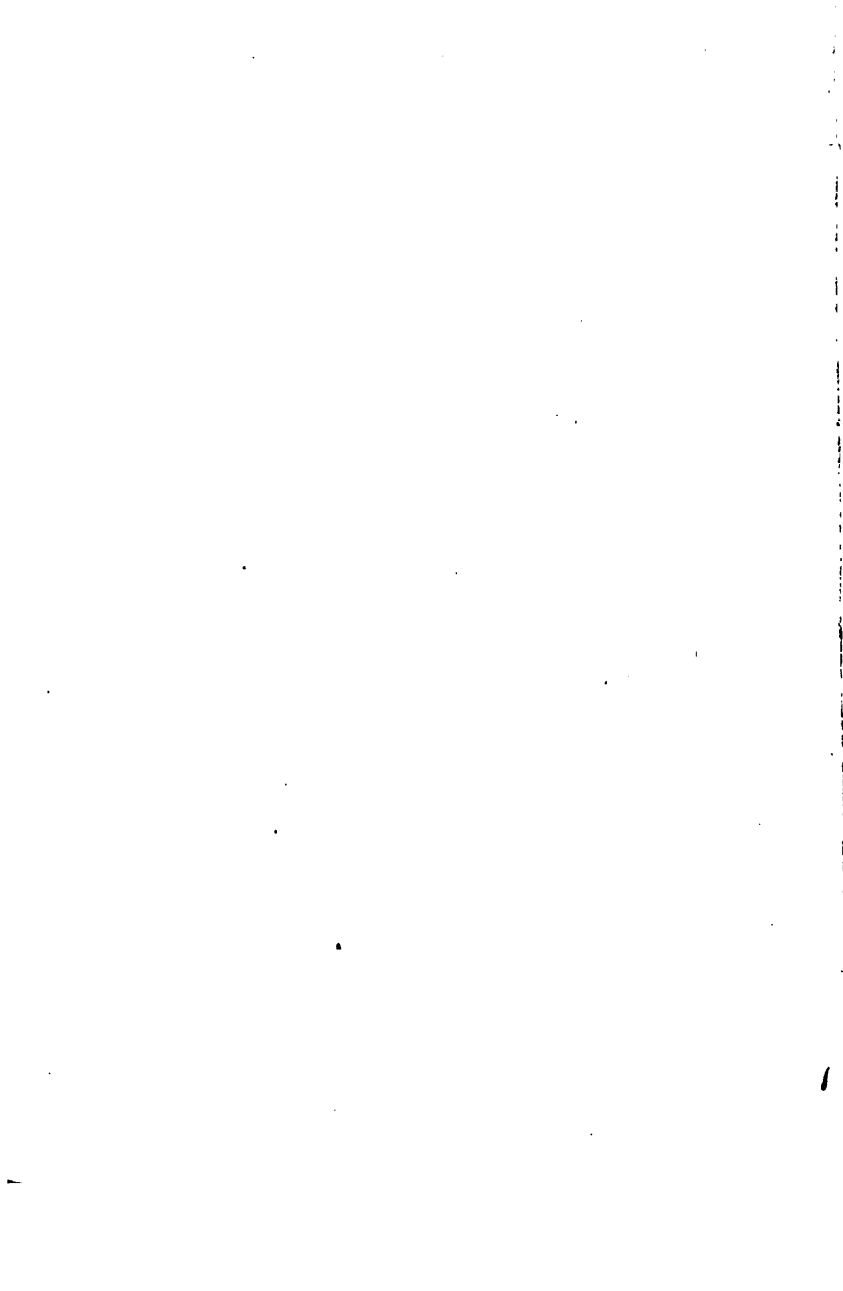
Minnie
from Aunt Gracie

Christmas 1869

NAS
Aulnay







A LITTLE BOY'S STORY.

(*MÉMOIRES D'UN PETIT GARÇON.*)

BY

JULIE GOURAUD. *pseud. of Antoinette Louise d'*

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

HOWARD GLYNDON. *pseud. of George, Lord Cathcart, Redoubt*

WITH EIGHTY-SIX ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DESIGNS BY
ÉMILE BAYARD.



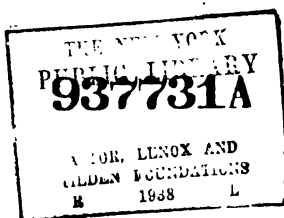
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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

THESE memoirs contain the story of the every-day life of a little French boy and girl, living in their own country. American children may be a little curious to know in what way the life and surroundings of French children differ from their own; and these memoirs give a fair idea of the difference. Riri is a pet name for Henri, as Margoton is for Marguerite.

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CONTENTS.



INTRODUCTION.

	PAGE
SHOWING HOW THESE MEMOIRS CAME TO BE WRITTEN . . .	1

CHAPTER I.

MY PORTRAIT	7
-----------------------	---

CHAPTER II.

FATHER	12
------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

I GO INTO GARRISON. — OUR COUNTRY HOME	21
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

LEARNING TO READ	30
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

MAMMA	39
-----------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

SEVEN YEARS OLD	46
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

MY TUTOR	52
--------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

WHICH WILL PLEASE	61
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

MY FRIENDS	67
----------------------	----

CHAPTER X.

OUR BABY-BROTHER, AND OUR COUSINS	80
---	----

CHAPTER XI.		PAGE
THE BAPTISM		89
CHAPTER XII.		
OF WHICH THE AUTHOR IS NOT AT ALL PROUD		96
CHAPTER XIII.		
A MOMENT OF ERROR.—SEVERAL REMARKABLE EVENTS		106
CHAPTER XIV.		
THE HISTORY OF A TOOTH		118
CHAPTER XV.		
LEARNING ENGLISH		125
CHAPTER XVI.		
PLEASURES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS		132
CHAPTER XVII.		
THE RETURN HOME		148
CHAPTER XVIII.		
PAPA'S ILLNESS		158
CHAPTER XIX.		
SEVERAL INTERESTING MATTERS		164
CHAPTER XX.		
WHICH WILL CAUSE REGRET		176
CHAPTER XXI.		
SUPERBE AND GENTILLET		184
CHAPTER XXII.		
OUR HAPPINESS ON GETTING WELL AGAIN.—THE BEES		202
CHAPTER XXIII.		
WHERE THE AUTHOR IS OBLIGED TO PRETEND TO SOME SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE.—THE ANTS		208
CHAPTER XXIV.		
HOSPITALITY		217

CONTENTS.

vii

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEPARTURE. — PARIS	PAGE 231
----------------------------------	-------------

CHAPTER XXVI.

MR. ANDERSON, — THE SEA. — LONDON	245
---	-----

CHAPTER XXVII.

OUR IMPORTANCE AS TRAVELLERS	279
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUSION	286
----------------------	-----





INTRODUCTION.

SHOWING HOW THESE MEMOIRS CAME TO BE
WRITTEN.

A LITTLE girl came running up to her brother, one morning, with a new book in her hand, calling out : —

“ Brother, brother ! Do look at the nice new book that mamma has just given me : ‘ The Memoirs of a Little Girl ! ’ That must be a clever little girl, to write her own memoirs — don’t you think so ? ”

He took the book, and turning it about, said : —

“ Eh ? What ? ”

“ Aha ! Mr. Riri ! ” said his sister exultingly ; “ the girls are ahead of the boys this time ! so you won’t be able to say any more that little girls ” —

“ Sister ! when have I spoken ill of little girls ? ”

Said she, “ O no, *you* haven’t, that’s true ; I didn’t mean just that ; but you are so proud because you are studying Latin. All the boys that study Latin are proud of it, and think they are so much cleverer than we girls. And now, *we’ve* got something to

be proud of, too. A little girl has written her memoirs, and that's more than any little boy has done yet."

Henri said reflectively, "Very true."

"And it must be very interesting, too; for this is the first time a little girl has ever written her memoirs."

Said Henri, "Very interesting, of course."

But Marguerite interrupted him. "Now, Henri, you are jealous!"

"I? Jealous!" said Henri. "No indeed! There's only one thing that I'm sorry for, and that is that it is not you, my dear little Margoton, who have written the 'Memoirs of a Little Girl.'"

Marguerite cried enthusiastically, "Ah, Henri, how I love you. Now, I have an idea; can you guess what it is?"

"I see the idea in your eyes, Miss Marguerite!"

"Ah, you cunning thing!" said she, laughing. "Well, tell me what it is, sir!"

Henri said, "You are thinking what a nice thing it would be for me to write my memoirs."

Marguerite clapped her hands.

"It is just that. How nice that would be! And you would write something about *me*, too; wouldn't you?"

Henri said gravely, "O yes! on every page, of course!"

Marguerite seemed quite overwhelmed at this.

"And it would all be printed. They will print my name, too?"

Said Henri, "O yes ! and mine, too."

But Marguerite said, with sudden timidity,—
"Brother, do tell me ! must we tell *everything* in our memoirs ?"

Henri laughed. "Ah, Marguerite, you're afraid already."

Said Marguerite, "Well, you know we all have our own secrets ; and mamma says that the reputation of a little girl is a very important thing ; so you must be careful what you say about me."

"Everybody knows that children are not perfect beings," said her brother.

But Marguerite said, "That's a very commonplace saying. But I'm sure we ought to be very particular, when everybody will know that it is *I* ; and I'm very sure that you remember all the ugly things that I've said or done, you have such an astonishing memory ; I'm afraid of your memory, Henri !"

"Don't be uneasy, my dear. I won't forget the good example you have always set me, in such matters ; I won't remember anything that had best be forgotten."

Marguerite seemed reassured, and said,—
"Brother, I am the oldest. I am ten years old and you are nine. We shall soon be grown people. Nurse told me so this morning."

Henri showed her a picture in the book, saying :
"Look ! there is a brother in the 'Memoirs of a Little Girl,' so there must be a sister in the Memoirs of a Little Boy."

Marguerite seemed all at once to have a new idea.

"The little boy and girl in the picture look like us, Henri."

Henri thought it was true, but said, "Now Marguerite, if you tell any one about my memoirs, I will give up the idea of writing them, I warn you!"

Marguerite was indignant.

"O, brother! I can keep a secret! And the proof of it is that since yesterday evening I have known that our Uncle Stephen is going to give you an aviary with birds in it, and I didn't tell you anything about it."

Henri threw up his cap and cried, "Hurrah! That's good news for me! And what kind of birds will they be?"

Marguerite said eagerly, "Goldfinches and Canaries, bought at Marseilles; and perhaps other kinds, too. If I find out anything else about it, I'll let you know. There is the bell for lunch. Let us go down."

Henri stopped her, saying solemnly, "Marguerite, listen to me. If you say one single word, I shall know of it, and I will throw '*my work*' into the fire."

Marguerite seemed to feel a little hurt, and said, "If you are capable of keeping your promise about writing the memoirs, I can keep mine, of not letting anybody know about it. Only, if I should talk in my sleep, it wouldn't be my fault then if it were found out, you know, brother."

From that day Henri became thoughtful. His mother would often ask him if he was sick. However, her fears were relieved by seeing that his appetite and his sleep continued as good as ever.

I can't explain to you, my dear readers, how little Henri managed in the matter of writing his memoirs, without neglecting either his lessons or his play. But it is true, that on the evening before his departure for college, he put into his mother's hands twelve little manuscript books very legibly written.

When my turn came to read them, I became so much interested that it seemed to me it would be selfish to keep private within the limits of the family, a narrative in which every child would find so many incidents, identical with his or her own early history. I said so to the mother of Henri, who is a friend of mine, and I have obtained her permission to publish these "MEMOIRS OF A LITTLE BOY."







A LITTLE BOY'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

MY PORTRAIT.

I DON'T know whether other authors draw their portraits or not; but for my part, I want to describe myself, to begin with. I have a notion that a little boy who writes his memoirs ought to tell people what sort of a boy he is, to look at. I don't believe they will be sorry to know about it.

Add fifteen days to nine years, and you have my age. They say that I am going to be tall, because my hands and feet are large. My hair is light, and it won't curl of itself; and it won't curl any way; which used to put my nurse into a bad humor when I was little. I have black eyes, like papa's; that is as much as to say, that I have fine eyes. My mouth isn't very large. For all that, however, I can make a Reine-Claude plum go into it whole. My teeth are small and white; some of them are missing. I'm not uneasy about that; I know they will grow again.

When I go out to walk with mamma, I hear the country women say to each other, — “ Ah ! that’s a pretty boy ! ”

As everybody says that I look like my mamma, who is handsome, I can’t believe that I am ugly ; and I am well content to look like mamma.

There ! you have my portrait ! Now I am going to give you Marguerite’s portrait, because I shall have often to speak of her in these memoirs ; and so you ought to know her also.

PORTRAIT OF MARGUERITE.

My sister, as you know, is a year older than I am. She is little, and she is plump. Her eyes are large and blue, and they have long black eye-lashes. When she cries, the tears hang like large pearls on those long lashes. Her nose is little — a saucy nose, a little in the air ; that is a polite way of saying that it is a little turned up ! Her hair is black, and curls naturally ; which pleases my nurse a great deal, since she doesn’t have to take the trouble of putting it up in papers. Marguerite has a little mouth, too, and a little spoon for it. Her skin is white, her hands and feet are small ; not half as large as mine. I find my sister charming, even when she pouts. But in truth I ought to say, that she doesn’t pout often. She is very gay, she sings like a bird, and she laughs at a mere nothing, just because she is so full of laugh, she can’t keep it from bubbling over ; and, for all that, she is a sensible little girl. You will have a chance to see that she is, more than once,



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before I am through. I think that my sister is better looking than I am, and I want my reader to think so too.

Now, I am going to begin.





CHAPTER II.

FATHER.

I WAS three years old. I was crawling about on my hands and feet on the carpet, at play, when an officer walked into the *salon* where I was. He took me in his arms and lifted me up into the air; and after having looked at me with an expression that made me feel I need not be afraid of him, he said out loud: "My son! my little Henri!" And then he kissed me, all over my face; stopped to look at me, and began to kiss me again. The door opened. Mamma threw herself into the arms of papa, who still had hold of me. Marguerite ran in, her feet bare, and her hair flying about her shoulders, crying as loud as she could: "Papa, O! my dear *little* papa!"

Then my nurse took me; and it was Marguerite's turn to be caressed. She knew papa, but I was hardly one year old when he went away to Africa. My papa is colonel of the Second Mounted Chasseurs, and his name is Monsieur Georges Derivoire.

I shall never forget that day! I often think how

delighted I was at the first sight of that papa, whose face I could not remember, but whom I used to call by his name many times a day, while he was away. Not that I knew exactly what it meant, but because I had been taught to do so. I understood very quickly that a papa loves his children ; and that the presence of mine was going to add to my pleasure and to my importance.

The next morning, the moment I awoke I wanted to see him ; and Catherine, my nurse, had all the trouble in the world to make me understand that he must not be disturbed, because he was very tired, having come so far ; and that I could not see him, and that I must be very careful not to wake him by my noise. When I understood this, I spoke lower. And then my nurse, to reward me, gave me my leaden soldiers ; and to keep me quiet in bed a little longer, she put a piece of board on the bedside, and ranged them in line, and moved them about for me. I at once named the best-looking of my cavaliers for papa ; and Catherine and I made him gain a glorious battle !

When it was time for me to get up, my nurse told me that I must be good, and let her wash my face, that I might have two clean, pretty, rosy cheeks to show to papa ! and that I must let her comb my hair, like a good little man ; and not run away and hide myself behind the curtains, as I was in the habit of doing. I was so deeply convinced of the importance of looking my prettiest for papa, that I was as gentle as a lamb during the whole time that she

was dressing me. Catherine profited by my unusual patience, to accomplish an operation of which I had the most inveterate horror. She cut my finger-nails — telling me that papa would take me for a little cat, if I appeared before him with *claws*. The frightful idea, thus adroitly presented to my mind, of being taken for a kitten, instead of a nice little boy, and by my own papa, upon whom I was so anxious to make a good impression, entirely overcame my repugnance to the sharp scissors of my nurse. She was very careful, also, to sustain my patience during the operation, by a soothing discourse of this kind : —

“ No, sir ! I tell you ; no, sir ! my little boy isn't a little cat — he hasn't got any claws — he doesn't want to have claws ! We are going to cut them all off nice.”

And then she kissed the tip of each finger in turn, after she had clipped its nail, and I, enchanted at being delivered from the risk of being mistaken for a little cat, repeated proudly after her, —

“ No ! no ! *no claws !* ”

Catherine was delighted, for she is very fond of cutting my nails. Then I let her brush my hair, put pomade on it, and curl it. Not more soberly could the most reasonable man have behaved under the hands of his barber. It is true, however, that Marguerite, equally as ambitious in regard to the appearance of her little brother, did a thousand little comical tricks to amuse me, and keep me from getting tired before I was fully dressed.

When we were both ready, Marguerite took me by the hand, and my nurse followed us and opened for us the door of the sitting-room, where papa and mamma were sitting together, talking.

Catherine stood at the door to see our reception. Marguerite led me up to papa. She let go my hand, so as to let me make the three last steps by myself, which had the effect of making me think that I could walk very well by myself, and from that time I became less fearful of falling when I walked alone.

When I think of the gentle, protecting spirit evinced towards me by my sister, when I was so little, I feel sorry that I was not the oldest, that I might have led her instead of being led by her. But I have caught up since then ; and when I get to be a man, it will be quite a different thing !

Sitting upon papa's knee, I began to examine him with a gravity which much amused him. His moustaches naturally attracted my eyes. I put up my hand and touched them, — timidly, at first, — but papa opened his mouth in a good-natured smile, so that I could see his fine white teeth, and I understood that there was nothing there that I need be afraid of.

Marguerite, who was leaning against the arm of papa's chair, followed all my movements attentively, and said in a womanly sort of a way : " How droll he is ! " My sister considered herself already a grown person, and regarded me as a child ! In her estimation the fact that she was a year older

than I, established a great distance between us. She used to teach me how to walk; and when I tumbled down, Marguerite used to pretend to fall down too, to keep me from being frightened, and to persuade me that it was no such great calamity to fall down!

It did not take me long to become familiar with papa; and I was well contented to know that he was not to go away again soon.

This is, perhaps, a good opportunity to explain to my reader that my papa, having passed several years in Africa, had obtained a furlough, and that then he had to go into garrison at Lyons. He came to see us often, when we were established in the country during the summer time; and in the winter time we were all together in Lyons. I think I ought to speak of these things here, as I forgot to do so at the beginning.

I soon became quite at my ease with papa. I got so that I would climb up on his knees every time I found the chance. I began to comprehend so well the importance which I gained in my own eyes and in the eyes of others, from day to day, in being so much noticed by papa, that I was fast becoming a veritable little pickle; and sometimes I was noisy and unruly. At such moments, papa's fine black eyes took an expression of severity which startled me. He would then call me *Sir!* and he would make me understand so plainly that a papa doesn't spoil his little boy as a mamma does, that I was very soon subdued and all went on well again.



"He took me in his arms." Page 19.

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The next thing which is clearest in my memory, is the appearance about this time of a fine black horse, on which my father rode, dressed gayly in his uniform. When my first surprise was over, I clamored loudly to get up on the beautiful animal. Papa was immensely pleased at this. He took me in his arms, allowed me to strike the horse gently, and we went off, first at a trot and then at a gallop. Mamma and my nurse were very uneasy about me, which, however, did not prevent them from admiring my boldness, and being proud of it. Catherine declared that there wasn't my equal for courage in the world, and that the Prussians would find it out one day !

From that moment my passion for swords and drums developed itself after a fashion perfectly distracting, even to Catherine. I had a fiddle, too, upon which I scraped away, in a manner that gave *me* intense pleasure, no matter what may have been its effect upon the ears of others, till at last my nurse fixed upon the happy idea of telling me that all great players upon the violin contented themselves with thrumming the strings ; so I threw away the bow, and took to pulling at the catgut of my fiddle. This arrangement gave full satisfaction to the rest of the family as well as to myself. Everything amused me, however. Card-houses, towers built of dominoes, water-colors daubed over white paper, toy-horses, but most of all my soldiers. I ought not to forget my whip. Catherine couldn't count the crackers which she has made for it. O !

how pleased I was, when I could have my whip in my hands and crack it outside of the house, or in the hall. But I ought to tell you, that I was quite content with the noise I made, and that I never tried my whip on any of the cats or dogs about the place. In the mean time, Marguerite began to complain that I made too much noise. Sometimes she called me tiresome ; then, finding out that she could not persuade me that a drum made too great a racket, or that a wooden sword was dangerous, she ended the dispute by coming over to my side and taking a part in my play. This affability on her part, always renewed the good understanding between us, when it had been clouded by these little differences.

I see, a little late perhaps, that I have not told you that we lived at Grenoble. I forgot it. That is not astonishing ; and whether I lived in a house in one town or another, it mattered little to a boy of my age. However, young as I was, the beautiful mountains which rose up behind the city had already attracted my attention — above all, when they were covered with snow.





CHAPTER III.

I GO INTO GARRISON. — OUR COUNTRY HOME.

A WHOLE year has gone by, dear reader, and a great event has taken place. I don't wear dresses and aprons any longer : I have assumed the garb proper of my sex : I shall not say more on this subject.

Papa was in garrison at Lyons, and the rest of us were all there to pass the winter. I grew very tired of Lyons, because it was such a foggy, damp place, and Catherine and mamma were always in terror of sore throats for us. So if the sun did not shine exactly to suit Catharine, we did not go out to walk. It was while we were thus shut up, that I learned to dance. Mamma had to let us romp about a little, and some way of moderating our play had to be invented, else I would rush about the *salon* at the risk of breaking everything that came in my way. So, mamma fell upon the idea of teaching us to dance. And I, all at once, showed the most remarkable talents in that direction.

After breakfast, and especially after dinner, mamma sat down to the piano and played for us. I would take Marguerite by the hand, and we would both dance so well, that papa would sit throughout the entire lesson, looking at us, while he smoked his cigar.

Catherine and the other servants used to come to the door of the *salon* to see us dance. Behold the consequences! We no longer danced simply for the sake of the exercise, but to attract attention and receive compliments on our performances. So mamma suppressed the dance in the *salon*, and the only resource left us was to dance secretly, to an air hummed by our good Catherine.

I saw papa smoking and I wanted to smoke also. I asked him to give me some cigars. To my great astonishment he promised to bring me some. But I didn't believe he was going to give them to me; because we all know very well that we sometimes talk nonsense, even when we are very little; and that one doesn't always hope to have one's extravagant demands complied with. So I was greatly surprised when papa brought me some cigars ready lighted, red with fire at one end. I hesitated for a moment to take them; but when I did so — O, happiness! they were of chocolate. Mamma told my sister that she might smoke some of them, also.

This little play went on for a whole week, during which time papa did not let us want for cigars. He was so good.

One day I learned that we had a place in the



"Mamma sat down to the piano." Page 22

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country, and that we were to be taken there as soon as the fine weather came. After that, I never ceased tormenting poor Catherine, to know when fine weather would come. It came at last. We were all well satisfied to leave the city. But when I heard that papa must stay with his regiment, I said I would not go! My bad humor on this subject pleased papa. To console me, he told me that our country home was not very far off, and that he would come often, and give me a ride on his horse. I cried a little, for all that, when the day came for us to go.

It was the end of May; the weather was splendid. After passing a night at Grenoble, we set out for Saint-Jean, which was the name of the village near which our country home is. When one is on the road to it, one sees tall mountains rising in the air, and then a château — that is ours. One has to go very slowly when travelling among the mountains, the reason of which is easily guessed. Our carriage leaned first from one side to the other, and jolted along slowly, during a whole hour and a half. It wasn't at all amusing for a curious, restless little fellow, like myself; but Catherine held me next to the door, and did the honors of her native country for me, describing everything we passed. At last we arrived. Mamma was received like a queen; the country people were glad to see us; and above all to see *me*, who had been carried out of Saint-Jean in long clothes, and in my nurse's arms.

We had hardly alighted, when Mademoiselle

Agatha, who always stays at the chateau, winter and summer alike, took possession of us. I was agreeably surprised by the sight of a magnificent terrace in front of the chateau. Without losing a moment, I took some marbles out of my pocket and threw them on the terrace, where they rolled as smoothly as on an inlaid floor. Some little lizards were trotting about in the sun. They stopped when I looked at them, and then, after having considered the matter, doubtless, they disappeared under the railings.

I cried out, "O! the mountains! here, there, everywhere, the mountains! and lower down the little gardens, and the pretty orchards!"

These "little gardens" were the fields of the valley of Graisivaudan. I know that now. I can tell you also, that from our dear terrace one can see the mountains of Savoy; which are blue in the morning and rose-colored at evening. In front, are the rocks of Saint-Pancrace, which are notched into peaks; and which, some years ago, a friend of papa's had the imprudence to climb up to, and sit down upon, and barely escaped from falling into the cascade of Craponeau, he got so dizzy. We can see Rabot, the citadel of Grenoble, and the high-road, and the river Isère; which makes a beautiful M, just as I do when I write my sister's name.

This little description, I hope, will be useful; for I want you to love our terrace, as you will find me often there with Marguerite, reciting our lessons to mamma, or playing at ball; and above all, on the

days when we are expecting our dear papa to come home.

When I first stood upon it, everything enchanted me, for all was new to my eyes in that beautiful country. What pleasure to go out without waiting to be carefully dressed, and to run out of the *salon* upon the terrace whenever we liked.

Catherine declared that she could see me growing. She exaggerated a little, but the truth is that in a few months I grew to be a great boy, leaping and springing about everywhere, like a goat.

I had very soon scraped acquaintance with the children of our gardener and our farmer; and I would have played with them willingly, if Marguerite would have joined us; but that was impossible. And it was sufficient to make me forego their company. We had a little garden of our own; it was a great pleasure to us; I planted, I watered, I weeded it. One day when we had decided to plant some cherry-stones, to see what would come of it, the sky clouded over, and soon the rain fell in torrents; I was seized with a fit of profound despair, to which succeeded wrath.

Catherine exhausted all her scientific attainments, and all her powers of consolation, to soothe me and make me comprehend my unreasonableness. I wouldn't hear her, and I took refuge near Marguerite, who was in her own room, playing with her doll.

My good little sister ran up to me at once, as I came in.

"Why, what is the matter, Riri? why are you crying, and what troubles you so much?"

"It is raining!"

"Ah! Riri is crying because it is raining! And suppose it rains to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, also?"

I wanted to plant my cherry-stones."

"Well, little brother, we must have rain, so that the ground will be soft, and then you can plant your cherry-stones much better."

"Do you think so?"

"I am sure of it. I am very glad of the rain."

"Why?"

"Because I want to do my doll's washing and make soap-suds with hot water, as Catherine does. Don't you want to help me with the washing, Riri?"

"Pooh! men don't do washing! That's women's work!"

"Indeed, sir! Very well! I saw a man, as I was passing through the town the other day, helping his wife with the lye-washing."

"Really?"

"Yes; really and truly."

"Well! sister, let us do the washing!" So I took Marguerite's advice. But I must own that I acquitted myself badly of the task, and that except for the pleasure of slopping myself, and spilling as much water as I could on the ground, this kind of play appeared insipid to me. The tastes and habits of a man were beginning to de-

velop themselves in my character ; and Marguerite was already a little housekeeper ! We grew up in the warm sunshine of Dauphiné. Papa kept his promise well. He came often to stay several days at a time, and always brought us toys — no matter what ; we were always sure to find something nice or good in his pockets.

We all know that the days follow, but do not resemble each other. You will see in the next chapter how I learned this truth.





CHAPTER IV.

LEARNING TO READ.

HITHERTO, all that had been expected of me in the morning was to go hand in hand with Marguerite, to say good-day to mamma. But now I was allowed to remain for prayers. We both knelt on the same cushion, Marguerite and I, before a little image of the Madonna, which we had learned to love from the time that our eyes had first remarked the gentle expression of its features.

Marguerite said the prayer out loud, and I repeated every word after her. We never failed to make many good resolutions to try to become better and wiser. But these promises on our part had become mere matters of form, and had not yet been put to the test. What, then, was our surprise, when one day mamma, drawing us both towards her, said:—

“My darlings, you are growing up fast. You are old enough to begin to learn to read.”

At these words I would have run away, but Marguerite kept fast hold of my hand.

Mamma went on:—

“ You see that your father and I read and write. Our friends all do the same. And now you have both arrived at the age when it is necessary to begin your education. Otherwise you will never know a great many things which it will be impossible for us to tell you of, because there is so much to be read about, and it would take up too much time.”

Mamma, seeing that her discourse was very little to our tastes, and above all to mine, took up a handsome book, and began to show us the pictures. The gentle Marguerite became at once interested, and began to ask a thousand questions; and then running to Catherine, showed her the book, at the same telling her that we were going to learn to read, and that soon we should know for ourselves all the nice stories that were ever told!

For my part I refused the little book which mamma offered me, saying that I wished to learn to read out of the newspaper.

Unfortunately, papa came in just as I was making my conditions with mamma, and I saw by his face that he found my caprice comical enough; and so I would not give it up. I held out so well that my parents humored my droll fancy; and I passed six months in learning my letters by picking them out in the advertisements in the newspapers. During the rest of the time, I was humored and spoiled by the gardener and by Catherine, who had no more reverence for learning than I had. Marguerite was studying two hours of every day. She learnt her spelling lessons, and made pot-hooks

and o's and a's. My little sister was very proud of her acquirements. She showed me her copy-book, and said, —

“Riri, you must study, too! We will learn our lessons at the same table, and we shall gain our rewards together.”

“Look!” she continued, drawing a little box from her pocket. “I gained five good marks this week, and papa has given me five sous. I know how to count them, and I can count my fingers, too!”

I was not insensible to the argument of the five sous. I took the box out of my sister's hands. I shook it; and the rattling of the sous, I must say, was agreeable to my ears; but just then two yellow butterflies flew over my head, and I broke away to run after them, thinking to myself that at any rate I should always know enough to become a general and kill the Bedouins.

I was lazy, I must own. The sight of a book disgusted me; and, in spite of my liking for pictures, I avoided being enticed into looking at them, from fear of being taken in some trap, and made to learn my lessons. I grew with a rapidity very inconvenient for a lazy boy. Strangers always thought I was six years old, though I was hardly five.

One day, an “*enfant terrible*” (the meaning of this term has been explained to me), managed to worm out of me an avowal of my ignorance; and then he could think of nothing better to say, in the very middle of the drawing-room, than this: —

“Mamma! Little Henri doesn’t know how to read!”

And then followed some moral reflections from his mother, which made me furious; and, in spite of the little signs made to me by Marguerite, I put back my soldiers, with which we two boys had been playing, into their box, and put the box away, telling my officious friend that I had sent them to school, so that they might not remain as ignorant as myself!

Some days afterwards Marguerite came looking for me at the entrance of the main avenue, where I was playing at leap-frog.

“Brother! don’t you want to sit down here on the bench with me for a little? I will read you such a pretty story. It isn’t to show you how wise I am, but only to amuse you.”

Marguerite’s eyes were so blue, and so full of contentment, that I yielded at once. She took a little book out of her pocket, and we sat down under a fine cherry-tree, which now lent us its shade, after having given us its fruit; and my sister read, without missing a word, the story of “Beauty and the Beast.” You doubtless know that story; you have felt your heart soften as you have read it. As for me, I was seized with such a strong affection for the Beast that, thinking he was to be left to die of chagrin, I burst out into reproaches against the Beauty who had abandoned him!

But said Marguerite, “If you had seen in the mirror papa sad and desolate, wouldn’t you too

have stolen away? For my part, I think the Beauty was very good to stay so long."

I admired the cleverness of my sister. I was ashamed of myself for not being able to make out anything in those pages where she so easily saw so many wonderful things. And, supposing that all other books were filled with similar stories, I decided to be less rebellious about learning to read. The "Beauty and the Beast" then became the subject of a long conversation between us.

"Marguerite," said I, "if I were a beast, would you love me?"

"Yes, brother," said she; "but I should be very sorry to see you become so ugly."

"But," I said, "if I were a little white rabbit?"

Marguerite exclaimed enthusiastically, "O, how I would love you then, Riri! I would go among the mountains to hunt wild thyme for you. I would take you on my knees that I might fondle you more easily. I would play with you in the meadows. And never, no, never! my little brother, would I eat you!"

We laughed heartily at this idea, and then I said, "Well, I hope you wouldn't! But if I wanted to live in the rabbit warren, would you go with me?"

Marguerite was a little indignant, and said, "How can you doubt it? I would make you a nice little house in the ground. I would surround it with an arbor of vines large enough for you to go in and out of, as you liked. There should be roses and ivy around your little house. Only, brother, I should



"There should be roses and ivy around your little house." Page 34.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

tremble to see you pursued by the hunters. I would try to keep you always near me. I would tell you pretty stories. You would not speak to me, but you would understand me. I shouldn't like, however, to have your black eyes changed for the pink eyes of a white rabbit. You should always have a bed of leaves fresh and fragrant upon which to repose yourself."

"And if I were a pretty goldfinch?" I said.

Said Marguerite, "I would leave the door of your cage open that you might fly to the woods and revisit your friends. But I should be very uneasy about you while you were gone. I would play you tunes on the bird-organ¹ that you might become a fine singer. I would put all that you liked best in your cage. You should always have pure, fresh water to bathe in. I would often take you in my hand, and kiss your pretty little head. I would put some seed in my mouth, and you would peck at it without biting me!"

This last idea seemed to please Marguerite greatly. But I went on:—

"You would love me, sister, because I should be a pretty bird, but that is very different from the Beauty, who could love even an ugly Beast."

Marguerite said, reflectively, "That is true, brother. But, if instead of becoming a horrible beast (which you cannot do, you know, because you have a soul), you should be covered all over your body

¹ A small musical instrument played upon to teach young birds to sing.

with ugly pock-marks like poor little Baptiste, I would love you then just as I love you now; but that doesn't prevent me from being very well satisfied to have a nice-looking little brother, instead!"

The story of "Beauty and the Beast," however, had a great influence on my future. I asked Marguerite to teach me to read. To my surprise she refused. Said she:—

"If you didn't know your letters, Henri, I could teach you them. But the rest is too difficult for me; and I believe that only mammas can teach children how to read words."

I said that the Beauty would have been kinder to the Beast, but my sister was firm; and, after a grave deliberation, it was decided that we should go together to tell mamma the great news of the day.

"Come!" said Marguerite, taking me by the hand to make sure of me.

I obeyed, but not without reluctance. I felt the importance of what I was about to do.





CHAPTER V.

MAMMA.

MAMMA was occupied at her writing-desk, but she smiled on seeing us enter. "Mamma," said Marguerite, "we have come to tell you something which will please you very much. Riri wants to be good and learn to read."

Mamma laid down her pen, made us come close to her, and embraced us. Marguerite was rosy with joy, and chattered away like a little scatter-brain. I was less enthusiastic, for I already had a presentiment of the sacrifices which the steps that I had taken would cost me.

I am persuaded that mamma saw what was passing within me, although she had the air of not noticing anything. It is astonishing how papa and mamma see everything. I wonder if I shall see and understand everything just as they do when I am grown!

I supposed that my first reading lesson would not come until the next day, and according to my ideas that would have been all too soon to commence. What, then, was my surprise when I saw my dar-

ling little mamma leave her writing-desk and take up a book, at the same time saying that we should never put off till to-morrow the carrying out of a good resolution. Then she caressed me, saying we must keep it a secret, and surprise papa by and by, when I could read. If all that she said had not been accompanied by kisses, I should have begun to cry, — so much did I dread that first lesson. At last it commenced. I shall never forget about it. I stood in front of mamma; the book was open on her knees. I spelled after her, wishing every moment to turn the page, looking to the right and to the left, and ready to escape upon the first trifling pretext. The lesson lasted five minutes, perhaps, but to me it appeared a long, long time. At last mamma told me that she was satisfied with me.

I rushed out joyfully upon the terrace, saying to myself, at the same time, that it wasn't so bad, after all, to learn to read.

During two months mamma treated me with a tender patience, for which I was far from being grateful. Little by little I became a naughty boy, lazy, passionate, dreaming of nothing but kites, balls, and whips, and everything except study: and three years passed in this way. I was hardly six years old. The reader must not be astonished, because I make the years move on so fast. One must remember that I have forgotten a great many things that took place, because they all resembled each other so much. Other people before me, who have written their memoirs, have made up a good

deal, I think, to' make things seem in their favor. I am too little to do that, and, above all, I love to be truthful. I never have told a lie yet; and thus it shall be to the end.

It is the love of truth which now induces me to take up "the thread of my discourse," as my nurse says. Marguerite passed her time in begging grace for me, — promising always that every new misdemeanor should be my last, that she would make me study, and all sorts of fine things. Mamma heard, and was patient, and pardoned, which, however, did not prevent the colonel of the Second Mounted Guards from giving me a good whipping when he came home.

To be sure, this is a method of tuition not quite to the taste of idle little boys like myself, but we must admit that it brightens up the young idea considerably. The operation accomplished, I used to remain reasonable for five or six days at a time.

You see, my dear reader, I was a real little scapegrace. Catherine was always going to mamma, telling her that I must have new clothes. My collars, instead of being around my neck, rested for the greater part of the time in the park. It was a rare thing to find a handkerchief in my pocket, and my shoes never had any strings to them. My nurse used to clean me three or four times a day; and if you could have seen me, you would have believed in the necessity of so doing! If you should by chance recognize yourself in this portraiture, I shall count upon your indulgence. If Catherine lost

sight of me for a single moment, I was off and away. One of my great pleasures was to take the horses to water. I used to climb up behind the farmer's boy, whistling as he did, and off we would go. We always came back at a trot, I highly delighted with the expedition. Poor Catherine was never tired of repeating that I should be brought home dead some fine day. She never could keep up her composure when she saw me at the top of a ladder, or riding astraddle down the balusters of the hall stairs, or slipping my head between the bars of the gate, or running after the dogs and pulling them back by their tails. Catherine always said on such occasions that I should be the death of her. But when I jumped into her lap, and hugged her, she would forget all about it.

One of my dearest play-fellows was Turk, a dog of about my own age. O! what scrapes we have been in together! I never pulled Turk by the ears or the tail. I knew better! But I didn't torment him any the less in various other ways. His name of Turk gave me the idea of dressing him up in a turban. Marguerite helped me with her advice, and gave me some of her doll rags for the purpose; and Turk, good dog, although he kept flapping his beautiful ears impatiently, lent himself indulgently to our pranks. He couldn't do without us, any more than we could do without him.

We knew what he liked, and we were always petting and spoiling him, even while we teased him.

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It was therefore a great grief to us when Catherine said to us one day, —

“Children, don’t touch Turk; he is sick; he is going to die.” And the next day the poor beast was found stiff and cold in his kennel. The death of Turk surprised us greatly. It was the first time that we had ever seen the effects of death. Papa told us that we should have another dog, and then we forgot our troubles.

As I don’t remember anything more that is worth speaking of, that happened about this time, I shall skip one year.





CHAPTER VI.

SEVEN YEARS OLD.

ON the twenty-fourth of June, the seventh anniversary of my birth, Catherine, in her turn, took me in hand, and lectured me at great length on my heedless ways. She added that the indulgence which had hitherto been extended to me, must not be looked for by a great seven-year-old boy. She then begun to illustrate her discourse with biographical sketches, in which the principal characters were all good children of seven years of age !

But of all the reasons that she pressed upon me as to the need of reform and improvement, that which touched me most nearly was the fear that my bad conduct would prevent me from becoming a colonel, and having a black horse to ride upon, and epaulets of gold upon my shoulders.

So great was my anxiety on this score that I said to Catherine, —

“O! make me an officer’s uniform ; I will dress in it when I study my lessons, and then you’ll see if I don’t get on better.”

Catherine did not let me have to ask her twice. She went out at once, and bought some gold and colored papers, and at the end of twenty-four hours I walked into mamma's room, my shako upon my head, a wooden sword at my side, and with epaulets of melon-seeds and gilt paper upon my shoulders.

Mamma was kind enough to humor my new whim. She said to me very seriously, and in the most natural manner, —

“Here, colonel, hold your pen better. Make your *o*'s and your *a*'s rounder! Ah, colonel! what is this? Another *e* too much like a *c*!”

All this was said by her, and responded to on my part, with a gravity which makes me laugh to-day when I think of it; for two years more are a great deal in the life of a little boy.

But if my military costume helped me in learning to write, it got me into a scrape which came near ending seriously. One day some of the village boys were playing at soldier with me. There were six of us, and I was the self-constituted chieftain of the band.

Artillery practice (without any firing off), assaults, the noise of drums, swords, and trumpets, — we had all that. We commenced it in the park, but continued the action outside. I wanted to be admired. All the country people turned out to look at us, as we went through the streets, laughing at the grave air with which we went through our exercises. The other children of the village gathered

around us, and lengthened out our procession ; and in a moment of enthusiasm I began — I don't know why — to call out, " God save the king ! " and all my comrades cried after me, " God save the king ! "

The joke was not quite to the taste of two worthy *gendarmes*, who came up to us, and invited us to change our salute into " God save the emperor ! " unless we wanted to be taken to prison.

Although I was a colonel, I couldn't help trembling at this threat ; still, however, I persisted in crying out, " God save the king ! " The crowd grew and pressed around the young rebels, and the *gendarmes* asked my name. The affair was growing serious, when Catherine, her head bristling with the knitting-needles which she had hastily stuck into it, pushed her way into the crowd, and caught me by the arm, calling me a truant, a disobedient boy, and a little scamp. The *gendarmes*, thinking, doubtless, that my nurse was the most fitting person to work a change in my political opinions, allowed her to lead me away ; quite contented when they learned that I was the son of a brave officer.

This adventure got me more than one reproof from Catherine, who liked the emperor, because she had once seen him pass !

Marguerite was applying herself more and more diligently to her studies. She was beginning to write with ease, and to recite fables. I was very far from following her good example.

Papa and mamma began to have long conver-



"I wanted to be admired." Page 47.

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sations together ; and when I came to them at such times, they would coldly send me away. I began to feel uneasy, for something told me that I was the subject of these mysterious consultations, and I found out soon that I had not been mistaken.





CHAPTER VII.

MY TUTOR.

ONE day papa came home from Lyons, and told me that I was to have a tutor, who was to be all the time with me ; that my day was to be regulated like Marguerite's ; that I was to have good marks and bad marks against my name, according to my conduct, and punishments and rewards.

This news, far from frightening, enchanted me. Some little boys of my acquaintance had a tutor, and they seemed perfectly happy. When the lessons were over, the teacher played with his scholars, or took them out to walk. He was their friend rather than their task-master. I awaited, therefore, with great impatience, the arrival of this new personage, although Catherine, when trying to make me behave, used to threaten to tell him of my naughtiness when he came. I remember as if it were yesterday the day that M. Hersant arrived. I had allowed myself to be dressed for a second time that day, so that I might make a creditable appearance before him. I did not wait for

mamma to call me, but entered the *salon* brushed and combed, and with clean face and hands, like the best child in the world.

M. Hersant embraced me, and asked me some questions, to which I answered politely enough. But when he unfortunately asked me if I loved to study, I took to my heels for a reply.

And yet there was nothing disagreeable about the good man. In the first place, he was not old; and if I had only given myself up to study, I should have been the happiest of little boys.

M. Hersant evidently loved children. He showed himself at first very gentle with me. He talked reason to me, as they say; but that was not at all what was needed in my case, and I must own to my shame, and very sorry I am to have to do so, that I made him unhappy by the necessity which I was constantly giving him of punishing me.

He gave lessons to Marguerite as well; and I don't think I am wrong in believing that it was the pleasure he found in instructing my charming little sister which retained him at our house so long. I had a perfect horror of lessons, copy-books, and pens. When it was decided that I was to study Latin, I rebelled openly. The sight of a grammar made me shiver all over.

Ah, dear reader! you will not like me any more when you see how bad I was! During one whole year I was a continual cause of trouble to my parents. Every day I got bad marks; nearly every day I had to be punished. In the country

or in town, wherever we might be, it was all the same. No matter what sort of weather was indicated by the barometer, fair, or foul, or changeable, there were always squalls and storms at our house, till my darling little mother was made ill by my bad behavior, and Marguerite didn't know me any more. My father made me come before him in his library, and told me that if I tried his patience much longer, he should send me away from home.

At that moment I was very far from imagining myself a superior officer ; for though I loved papa so dearly, I also feared him.

I was most unhappy myself, and I deserved to be so. When I think of that year of naughtiness, I am very sorry ; and the reader, who knows my sincerity, must believe me when I say that it is a satisfaction to me now, to punish myself, with confessing how very bad I was. At last things came to such a pass, no one could bear with me any longer ; and one day when I had been more lazy and negligent than ever, at the moment when I was about to quit the *salon* to go to bed, mamma called me back, and said to me in a calm and resolute manner, —

“ My child, since you do not wish to learn anything, we have decided, your father and myself, to give you a trade. We shall apprentice you to an honest upholsterer.”

Papa looked at me without saying a word. Marguerite, who was sitting in her little blue chair, hid her face in her hands, but I saw the large tears stealing down her cheeks. As for me, I didn't cry,

for I didn't believe a word that I heard about being put in apprenticeship to an upholsterer.

Papa would not kiss me good-night. Mamma, on the other hand, did not repulse me; but her kisses were not like those which she used to give me in the days when she was satisfied with me.

I told it all to Catherine, adding that I didn't believe I should be sent away. But she replied that I was wrong to think that my parents would keep a good and wise man like M. Hersant in the house only to lose his time with a lazy boy like myself; that tradespeople did not need to know Latin and history, and that as I did not like to study them, it was just the right thing that I should be an upholsterer; and that for her part she thought an honest workman was worth much more than an ignorant, idle gentleman.

I went to bed, as I did not care to continue a conversation which had taken a turn so little to my taste; and I pretended to fall asleep all at once.

Catherine had remained in the room, and I wanted to see what she was going to do. So I drew aside the bed-curtain without any noise, and, peeping out, I saw her arranging a suit of clothes, which seemed to be about the size of mine, but very different from those I was accustomed to wear.

My nurse sighed, and said out loud to herself, —

“It must be! It must be! Yet to see him go! I never can bear to put this ugly jacket on him, in place of his other, which is so pretty. But, after all, his parents are right; when a child won't mind, and

won't study—and he used to be so good!—and he won't get chocolate any more in the morning. Well, well, it is all over. Ah me! Ah me!” This time the tears came into my eyes and overflowed them. I fell asleep, weeping in spite of myself.

But the next morning it was no easy thing to get me up. I pretended to be sound asleep, and at last papa came and pulled the bedclothes off of me. He told me to get up at once, and I did not wait to be told twice. Somebody tapped gently at the door. It was Marguerite. I heard her saying on the other side, “Brother! brother! hurry and dress yourself; I will go with you to mamma and papa to ask pardon for you. M. Hersant says we can try, and that he will go with us.”

All the time that I was being dressed I cried and sobbed.

“Do you think papa and mamma will forgive me?” I asked of my nurse.

But Catherine only sighed. I had now to summon my courage to go into the presence of my parents. Marguerite led me by the hand. She was pale, and she cried too.

She went down on her knees, and I did the same.

“Dear papa!” said my good little sister, in a trembling voice, “Henri is very sorry to go away from us. If you would only forgive him this time, he will not be lazy any more.”

“It isn't Master Henri who dares to make such a promise as that,” said papa, incredulously twisting his mostache.

"O yes, papa; you promise, don't you, brother?"

But the tears gushed out of my eyes and choked my voice. It seemed as if I never should stop crying.

"Colonel," added M. Hersant, "I ask permission of you to keep my scholar one month more."

"You are very kind, sir! Think, I beg of you, of all that this boy has made you suffer, during the past six months. His mother is sick, on account of his bad behavior; and my poor little Marguerite, too, is made unhappy by it."

But M. Hersant insisted.

"Get up, sir!" said my father to me, "and thank your tutor, whose indulgence I admire. It is to him alone that you owe your pardon; but don't expect to obtain it a second time."

Marguerite helped me to stand up on my feet, for I wept so that I could not see any longer.

"Papa, you must kiss us, to make it all up." And Marguerite clung to papa's arm.

"Naughty boy!" said he to me, wiping my eyes with his handkerchief at the same time; "will you be good? are you sure of it?"

"O yes, my dearest papa; I am sure I will."

"Well, then," said mamma, embracing us in her turn, "it is all right, it is all over now; let us go to breakfast."

"O, but Catherine?" I said.

"Riri is right," said Marguerite, "we must go first and tell her the good news."

We disappeared for a little while. My nurse

hastily dressed me again in the clothes which I usually wore, all the time scolding me because I kept crying.

The others were already at table. I took my place, but I could not eat. At every moment a big sob rose up in my throat and choked me. .

Mamma talked of a donkey ride. Papa said he would follow us on horseback. But I still kept on crying; until one of the farm people came in, followed by a dog, whose tail was twisted up so comically, and so tightly over his back, in the shape of a trumpet, that when Marguerite slyly drew my attention to it I burst out laughing.





"When Marguerite slyly drew my attention to it, I burst out laughing."
Page 58.

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CHAPTER VIII.

WHICH WILL PLEASE.

MARGUERITE came to me this morning and asked me to read to her a little of my memoirs. I held back and made her beg for it; but at the bottom I was very well contented to do what she asked of me; and if she had taken me at my word, and gone away, she would have played me a trick not quite to my liking. My sister told me that she had never read anything so pretty; and that by and by, one day, I should surely write books like those of Berquin.¹ She added that she had not thought I could possibly have the courage to write such ugly things about myself. She leaned upon my shoulder and looked over, while I read aloud. But when we came to the places where I had written about herself, she left me to read alone, and only listened to me; and I saw that my sister was well contented with what she heard.

“Henri, you have a good memory,” said she to me, “but mine is better than yours; and I think,

¹ A popular French writer of books for children.

brother, that it will be only right to tell of some of the good things that you have done as well as of the naughty ones. Because, if by chance any little boy should want to take you for a model, he ought to know that if you were thoughtless and idle, you also had a good heart, and that you loved Catherine much. And if you are willing I will put you in mind of some little things that will not spoil your memoirs."

I hesitated a little, and Marguerite, guessing my thoughts, added —

"Nobody will know that I have helped you, and the merit will be all yours."

When Marguerite said this, I decided to accept her offer. I kissed her, and set myself to listen.

"Don't you remember, brother, when you were four years old, you used to have your hair done up in papers, and curled with the curling-iron? One day when Catherine was out, and the waiting-maid was doing your hair with the iron, she burnt you with it, because you were so restless, and would not keep still a moment. She was very sorry, was Laurence, because she had burnt you, and she wanted to put a plaster of grated potato on the burn. But you would not let her, because you thought mamma would notice it, and then Laurence would get a scolding; and she had not been very long with us. The curls of your hair hid the burnt place. You told me during the day, from time to time, that it gave you great pain; and when we were alone, I blew on it with my breath to ease

you a little. It wasn't until the second day afterwards that mamma, in curling your hair herself, saw the blister. Then I spoke out and told the truth, and mamma called you her good little darling. O, you must put that in !

"And don't you remember, brother, when we went with my nurse to have our lunch at the farm-house of Columbus, and to eat cherries ? A little boy passed, walking barefoot. He limped, because a sharp stone had pierced his foot. You wanted to give him your stockings. We ran on ahead of him, pretending to chase a blue butterfly ; and when he came up with us, and was passing on, you took off your stocking and gave them to him. He was afraid to take them, but we told him that you had plenty of others in a bureau at home. Then he put them on, and the rough ground did not hurt his feet any more. Catherine said that it was what is called *a good action*.

"Don't you remember, brother, that one day that ugly little Maurice, our gardener's brother, struck your balloon with his clenched fist, and made a hole in it ? And you wouldn't tell of him, because he would have been whipped for it.

"Do you remember, brother, when papa gave you a bright new ten-sou piece, and you gave it away to a poor old soldier who was sitting by the roadside ? And the soldier said, ' Thank you, my good little boy. God bless you ! '

"And don't you remember, brother, the day when I took a fancy to make dots with blue ink all over

my white dress, because I wanted to have a blue spotted muslin ; and Catherine was so angry with me about it that she asked mamma to punish me. And so I had dry bread, and nothing else to eat for two days at my lunch. And to comfort me, you asked to share the dry bread punishment with me, and you made me laugh by munching — biting the bread through so as to show the prints of your teeth in it. So instead of crying, as I should have done but for you, I was very merry, and we eat our dry bread together, playing all the time.”

I thanked my sister, and I hope as she hoped, that the recital of these little incidents will help to get me pardoned for my past faults.





"The soldier said, 'Thank you!'" Page 63.

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R

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CHAPTER IX.

MY FRIENDS.

ONE day my studies were suddenly interrupted by a visit from two little boys who had but newly come into the neighborhood. These boys were very pleasing in manners and appearance, and I got intimate with them all at once. They were younger than I, and were only just beginning to learn to read. They were not lazy boys. And for that matter, I too had now become industrious. M. Hersant had no cause to repent of having stayed with us, and my apprentice's dress had been given to one of the village children.

Paul and Noel, on their parts, were also well contented to come and play with us.

We had all sorts of games, but playing with our kites was the favorite one, above all the others.

One evening we were allowed to play on the terrace. M. Hersant, who always made one of our party at play, conceived the idea of fastening a small paper lantern to the tail of our kite. Soon the country people saw the red ball of fire high up

above the trees, and they all began to go about with their noses in the air and their mouths wide open, asking each other, as they stared up into the darkness, what it was and what was meant by it.

We boys were mightily tickled at this, so much so that we let the secret out in the middle of our promises to keep very still about it, and repeat the joke at the next convenient opportunity.

Little by little I forsook the company of Marguerite, who complained of my desertion, for that of my new friends.

I thought of nothing now, but of playing at horses with the two other boys, sliding down hill, leaping bars, running races, playing at ball, or spinning tops.

For a while, Marguerite did all she could to keep up with us, and not be excluded from our games. She it was who found the string for our kite ; and we let her play at ball with us, and often, leaning against a tree, she would laugh to see my top spin round ; but she and I were no longer inseparable as in the past. My conscience reproached me somewhat for my desertion of her, so that to quiet it I was obliged to say to myself that a boy could not be forever playing with a little girl — which, however, didn't hinder me on rainy days in the absence of Paul and Noel from playing at dinner with my sister and — yes — I must tell the truth — *her doll!*

I now knew how to read. I learned easily by heart, and I was fond of my writing lessons. And I got more good marks than bad ones in the re-



‘ The country people saw the red ball of fire high up above the trees.’
Page 67.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

port book which gave information every day of my progress.

Papa and mamma always changed the good marks into sous for us. But since M. Hersant has told me the story of King Midas, who saw everything he touched turned into gold, I begin to think that my fortune in those days was very modest. For all that our purse of heavy copper sous was the occasion of much happiness to us. My sister and I found a new pleasure in being able to satisfy our little desires independently of others, and with our own well earned money. You may be very sure we gave some of it to poor people. We never had the idea of selfishly hoarding up our money, and mamma always encouraged us in any charitable design.

How I just do love mamma! She won't let me call her my *beautiful* mamma any more. But it is all the same; there isn't any other mamma in the world more beautiful or better!

Are you fond of peaches? I hope you are, for then you will have a little indulgence, perhaps, for a story of one my scrapes, which I must, I am sorry to say, for honesty's sake, put into my memoirs.

Well, to begin, our farmer has a fine tree in his little vineyard, and at the time I write of, this tree was covered with beautiful peaches. One day as I was passing under it, I found a peach which had fallen to the ground, and unfortunately it tasted so good in my mouth that I went the next day and still the next, to see if I could find any others. But I

found none. Not daring to shake the tree honestly and openly, I leaned roughly against it as if without design, until a peach was shaken down, trying to think that it wasn't any harm at all, when I knew very well I was acting the part of any little thieving urchin. At any rate it was in that light that the farmer regarded my exploits, for he came to the house specially to tell mamma that I had been eating his peaches for the last eight days, and he was afraid I should be ill of a surfeit.

Mamma thanked him for having told her. I was surprised when at breakfast the next day she gave me, and me only, a beautiful yellow peach. Said she : —

“I know that you are fond of them, Henri, and you shall have another for your lunch.”

I felt myself turn red, but that wasn't all. I was going to run away into the park with Marguerite, when mamma detained me : —

“My son,” she said, “you have done a wicked thing in going every day secretly to eat Claude's peaches. You must repair the wrong you have done him. Let us look into your purse.”

I had only a four-sou piece left. She continued : —

“That is not enough. I am going to double the value of your good marks for this week only ; and as I am sure that you must be anxious to pay Claude the price of his peaches, I shall rely implicitly upon your diligence.”

I said “Yes” in great confusion. For I had

known very well, and had been reminded every time I took a bite of the stolen peaches, that they did not belong to me, and that the farmer depended on the sale of his fruit at our chateau or elsewhere.

“O! how I wish I were grown up, so that I wouldn’t want to do naughty things any more!” I said that to mamma. But she answered me that I must set myself to try not to do them now, for if I did not strive against wrong inclinations now, instead of stopping from doing them when I grew up, I should commit great crimes in place of small ones.

I kept my word all the week. M. Hersant knew nothing about it, for he did not distribute our rewards, and mamma kept the secret of my fault. But what torments those good marks cost me!

I saw continually before me Claude’s peaches in Latin or in French; and the water would come into my mouth. Those two francs gained within a week cost me more efforts than three months of application ordinarily would.

And that was not the end of it, for in giving me my two-franc piece, my little mother said to me, —

“You understand well, now, my dear child, that you have done a thing unworthy of yourself and of your father. We call the boys who shake the cherries off our trees little thieves. And yet those poor children have not a father or a mother capable of instructing and training them in what is right. And so they are less blamable than you are. Therefore, for the sake of your *honor*, you and I must go together, and carry to

Claude these two francs, which I consider the price of your gluttony."

I shall never forget the impression made upon me by those words, "*your honor*," as used by my mother. I felt myself get red. I felt as if I were grown up — which did not, however, prevent me from thinking that if papa had been there, he would have taken the switch to me for the third time!

Mamma, you know, read in my heart as she would have read in a book, and she said to me, —

"Come, Henri, have courage! You will be glad, I know, to have repaired your fault. Come, my dear child!"

So we started off, walking fast, and without saying anything.

It was their dinner hour at the farm, and as I calculated on having to face the assembled household of masters and servants, I was very much ashamed. I did not cry, however. As we drew near, Claude perceived us all at once, and he ran out to receive us. Then, without having waited for mamma to prompt me, I said to him, —

"I am a thoughtless boy, and a little glutton; but I am a boy of honor; this week I have earned two francs. I bring them to you to pay for the peaches I have taken from you. Farmer Claude, forgive me."

Farmer Claude in his turn now began to get red in the face, and he too came very near crying, I must say. He took me in his arms, and said that I had the true spirit of my family, and that if my

grandfather had been alive he would be proud of me.

The worthy man embraced me, and told me that he should keep my two-franc piece as long as he lived, and that when he died he should leave it in his will to the youngest of his grandchildren. I had been very far from thinking that such a disagreeable occurrence would have such a pleasant ending.

When I made mamma a sharer in my joy and surprise, she replied to me, —

“My dearie, there are some things that begin very well and that end very badly; and it happens sometimes the other way, too. It is understood that a child of your age will sometimes do wrong; but when he repents, and makes amends, all is forgotten, and we love him sometimes more on account of the penitent spirit evinced.”

Now of course I have not taken any special disgust for peaches on account of this incident, still I am never quite at my ease when I see them; especially hanging on a tree in a vineyard; as I am reminded of what has happened.

Noel and Paul came at least once every week. When we played so much that we could not play any longer, we used to get to talking. These were the only times when Marguerite used to join us. One day we watched the funeral procession of a poor man of the village.

Seeing the coffin, the priest, and the relatives of the dead man in mourning, Noel said: —

"If everybody is going to die, there won't be any *world* any more."

"You are stupid, Nono," said Paul; "we shall grow up and replace those who die. We shall be *gentlemen*, and Marguerite will be a *lady*."

We hadn't thought about that, Nono and I, so we begun to ask each other what we should do when we grew up.

"I," said Paul, "I shall write with blue ink, as papa does; I shall have a library full of books, and cases of butterflies, and ants, and birds, and flowers. And you, Nono?"

"O! I don't know," said Nono, jumping over the low railing, on which we were leaning.

"I," said Marguerite, "I would try to be like mamma; I would take good care of the poor sick people; I would make medicine for them; and I would have plenty of plasters and arnica in my secretary, and everything, just as the druggist has! And you, Riri?"

"O! I? I should win my title of colonel; I would have a black horse, and moustaches, and sabre, and pistols. But I would be good to my prisoners."

M. Hersant persuaded papa and mamma that, notwithstanding the difference in our ages, my little friends and I should recite together every week our fables, show our expense accounts and our notes; and the most diligent of us should wear the cross of honor, just as if we were at school.

I was enchanted with this idea, because I thought to myself that I should win, and keep the cross.



"You are stupid, Nono. We shall grow up—we will be gentlemen; and Marguerite will be a lady." Page 76.

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TILDEN FOUNDATION
R

But it didn't turn out so at all. For not only did Paul get it first, but I had great trouble to obtain it in my turn. M. Hersant also hit upon the idea of writing in a little note-book an account of my proceedings during the week, as they came to his notice, and reading it out aloud on Saturday evenings. When I had behaved well I used to find great pleasure in listening to those readings. Unfortunately the note-book was a true mirror, in which I was represented just as I was, with all my faults. Nothing escaped the eyes of M. Hersant, although he didn't wear spectacles, as did Paul's uncle.

My little friends did not stay as long as we did in the country. When they were gone, I thought myself very fortunate in having a sister with whom I could play at gardening, and blowing soap-bubbles on rainy days. But a great and joyful surprise was preparing for us.





CHAPTER X.

OUR BABY-BROTHER, AND OUR COUSINS.

CATHERINE told us one fine morning that we had a little brother. This news delighted us. Marguerite was already running to see him, when my nurse stopped her, and told us that he was asleep, but that we should make his acquaintance by and by. I am sure that Catherine must have been sorry that she had spoken to us so soon about him, for we tormented her terribly with our breathless questions! "What is he like?" and "What is his name?" We were like crazy little things. Catherine finished by getting cross with us, and told us that if we kept up such a noise, she wouldn't take us to see him.

After a while, when we had become more patient, she told us that mamma's sister was to be the god-mother of the baby, and that he was to be called Xavier, — that there would be a fine ceremony at the church, and a grand dinner at our house.

Marguerite asked if there would be plenty of sugar-plums, and nurse having said there would

be, of a surety, we couldn't think any more of the baby without thinking of sugar-plums too. At last Catherine made up her mind to take us to see our little brother. She took us each by the hand, and told us we must be quiet. We walked along very softly; the door was opened, and we saw a pretty blue cradle. Catherine lightly drew aside the curtain. The little one was asleep, and he was all rosy. We wanted very badly to kiss him, but Catherine wouldn't let us. She led us away, promising to bring us again.

"Nurse," said Marguerite, "is it true that we too have been as little as he is?"

"Yes, truly. And you will see him grow up as I have seen you grow." We were satisfied, but I would have preferred to have a little brother who would have been able to play at ball as soon as he came among us.

From that day my sister quite neglected me. She was always running into the room where Xavier was. She would kneel beside my nurse to see him better. She would touch his little hand, and count his fingers; and she tried, the dear Marguerite, to make herself useful. She went on errands for him, and rocked his cradle. If Catherine would have allowed it, she would have passed all her play hours in the nursery!

Mamma's sister came and brought with her Louis and Robert, her two sons. Louis was nine years old, and Robert was eight. We were so young when we had last seen each other, that it was much

the same now as if we had met for the first time. When the carriage drew up in front of the steps, we were there — Marguerite and I — with papa. Our cousins flattened their faces against the glass of the carriage-window, and called out, "Good morning ! good morning !" and "How do you do ?" When they had gotten out, we all embraced one another. Robert began by stepping on Marguerite's little foot, and so by his first act rather disinclined her towards him.

Mamma is tall, and my aunt is little ; they resemble each other, however. My aunt was dressed in black ; she seemed sad, but looked kind. Papa was much pleased to see her ; he said as he opened the door, "What happiness, dear Louise, to see you here !"

We had hardly entered the house when Robert said to me, "Let us go and play." As for me, I didn't ask anything better, but Louis said : —

"We must go and see my aunt first ; and then you don't know whether our cousin can go to play now or not."

"Ah !" said Robert. "Here is *Mr. Reasonable* commencing already ! We can't do anything when he is around !"

"Children," said their mother, "go up-stairs and get dressed. I am going to see your aunt. You will be called soon. Be good while you are gone."

I went with my cousins into their room. Robert met the servant who was carrying up the baggage. He wanted to pull away by main force, and carry



“She told us we must be quiet.” Page 81.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

by himself a heavy travelling satchel. He pushed away Louis, who wanted to help him. "I am strong," said he boastfully. M. Hersant took the bag away from him with an air of authority. "I am not going to allow you to hurt yourself the first thing on coming into the house, Master Robert."

Robert stared at M. Hersant with his mouth wide open; then he began to go up-stairs three steps at a time, that he might be the first to get to the top. Once in the room, he began to examine it. The wall-paper didn't suit him. The wardrobe was old. He went to the window, and then climbed up into it. His nurse arrived to open the trunk, and give him his clothes. He snatched the key from her, opened the trunk, and pulled everything about. His nurse said to him, —

"Master Robert, I warn you if you carry on so, I shall go and tell your uncle. Just as soon as we get here, you begin your worrying." Robert blushed angrily at being exposed, and began to talk of something else.

M. Hersant called me away at once, saying that I had a task to finish, and after that I should have a holiday. Before we had got down to the foot of the stairs, we heard Robert disputing with poor Madeleine.

"Listen!" said M. Hersant to me, "That is a disobedient and quarrelsome little boy. You must set him a good example, my dear Henri. I want you to help me to keep the promise I have made of becoming responsible for your cousins in the absence of their tutor."

M. Hersant would doubtless have moralized a little longer, but a letter was put into his hand. While he was reading it, I was thinking to myself, "It is strange how we find out all at once if a little boy is good or bad. I wish I knew what people think of me, the first time they see me! I like Louis better than Robert. But Robert seems to have more play in him than Louis has. M. Hersant is right. I too want to be *Mr. Reasonable*, as Robert calls it; and when there are two of us — Louis and I — Robert must follow our example."

But, in spite of my good resolutions, it cost me some efforts to remain quiet. I felt more than one impulse to leave my copy-book, and go to look for my cousins. Five minutes more, and I should have completed my task, when some one knocked gently at the door. "Come in!" said M. Hersant. It was Louis. He came in, and shut the door, and then asked M. Hersant if I should soon be through with my lesson.

"In a moment, my dear; wait for him," said my teacher.

Louis, fearing to distract me, went and sat down at the table behind me, and amused himself by looking at the butterflies that M. Hersant had caught that morning, to add to his collection. My task was soon finished, and I went out with my cousin. He said: —

"Robert is in your mother's room. I came to find you."

He took some nice new marbles out of his pocket, and offered me whichever I should like best. I chose a blue one. Robert was coming that way just then, and saw us. He joined us quickly, crying, —

“Let us play! Let us play! What shall we play, Louis?”

“Anything that you like.”

“And you, Henri?”

“Let us play at balloon. I have a splendid one.”

“O! that’s tiresome.”

“At ‘base’ then,” said I, seeing Marguerite at the window, “and then my sister can play with us.”

“O, I don’t like to play with little girls,” said Robert, “they are always getting hurt, and then we are scolded for it.”

However, Marguerite joined in our play, and I took care to keep her near me when we were running, so that no harm could come to her. That first day passed peaceably enough, and yet I did not feel quite at ease.

If I were to tell you all that took place during the visit of my two cousins, there would be enough to make a book as big as that in which M. Hersant looks out the Spanish words, to know what they are in French. I shall only tell you of the principal things that happened. All of them were not entirely edifying, but that was not always my fault.

These two little cousins of mine were very different, the one from the other. (You shall see soon why I say “*were*.”) Louis was gentle and quiet,

and a little timid. But I remarked that he did not lack in courage to resist his brother, when Robert wanted to induce or compel him to join in some act of disobedience. Louis was full of little attentions for my aunt and for my mamma, and he was very good to my sister. He spoke politely to the servants, and everybody praised him. You have seen that Robert was quite the contrary. I asked mamma the reason of this, and she told me that Robert had been ill a long time, and had been spoiled on account of it, and that my uncle was dead, and my aunt had not sufficient energy to govern her son. How happy I am to have a papa!





CHAPTER XI.

THE BAPTISM.

ON the third of September, my little brother was baptized. We went to the church at ten o'clock. It was splendid weather.

My aunt took the arm of the godfather, who was an uncle of mamma's. We had never seen him before. He came on the evening before the baptism, and went away the next day. He was old, but very jolly. We would have been glad to have had him stay always, because he told us such comical stories, and he had a cane which was also an umbrella, the like of which we had never seen before.

Papa and mamma also went with us ; they seemed both well contented. Marguerite wore a white dress and a pink sash. I also was dressed all in white, excepting a blue cravat.

Catherine had often described to us the ceremony of baptism ; which, however, did not prevent us from being very anxious to assist at it. Xavier did not cry. He opened his eyes wide, and looked

around him with an astonished expression. Marguerite and I signed our names properly in the register of the sacristy, and Louis also ; but Robert, in his anxiety to be impressive, made a great blot. My aunt scolded him, and the sacristan looked furious. In going out of the church mamma and papa gave money to the poor people who were assembled. And the baby's godfather showered sugar-plums around him, while all the children of the village came running and clapping their hands, and scrambled for them. They followed us as far as the house, for it rained sugar-plums all the way. We, too, had plenty of sugar-plums, but we had them in little gilt paper bags. My aunt gave us such pretty prayer-books — prayer-books expressly for children. They had pictures in them. I thought Marguerite's was the prettiest of all ; and I was not sorry for that, because I love my sister dearly. When we got home Xavier was brought into the *salon*. Mamma took him in her arms, and said, as she looked at him, —

“Poor little baby!” and papa's and mamma's eyes were full of tears.

I told Marguerite about it, and she told me that there were tears of joy as well as of sorrow. She had been very near crying once when mamma came back from Switzerland, after we had been left alone at home with Catherine for a long time. My sister knows many things that I don't understand, and so I consult her often.

Robert tried to keep himself from doing naughty



"The baby's godfather showered sugar-plums around him." Page 90.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

things for about eight days ; after that time he didn't bother himself any more with trying not to — and Marguerite became his victim.

If she were about to pluck a flower, he would run on before her, and break it off, and trample it in the dust. As she was afraid of cows, he would cry out all at once, —

“ O see ! look at those cross cows over there.”

Indeed, he teased her from morning till night.

One day Marguerite said to us, “ I wish I had a pretty bouquet to put on my little table in front of the picture of My Guardian Angels.”

“ O ! wait a little while, cousin,” said Robert, “ I will gather you one which will please you, I'll warrant.”

He went away, running as fast as he could ; and he soon came back with a large bouquet. He had gathered the most beautiful roses, without asking permission.

At first my sister hesitated to accept it ; for we were always forbidden to gather the roses. But at last she took it. She had hardly had it in her hand, before a little toad leapt out of it upon her bosom. She gave a piercing scream, and became very pale ; and I threw myself furiously upon Robert, and a battle began, with cuffs, kicks, hair pulling, and tumblers upon the ground. At last Robert having got me by the nose, the sight of blood stopped the fight. Marguerite had run to call for help. M. Hersant soon came. Robert and I were red and furious, and we fell to abusing each other.

"Henri! what is this I see?" said my tutor, gravely. "Is it thus that you keep your good resolutions of this morning?"

My nose hurt me so much that I was glad to be scolded, so that I might have an excuse for crying.

"Sir," said I, "I was paying him off for frightening my sister; and I will do it again if he troubles her any more."

My aunt came and led my cousin away. She looked sad and embarrassed. Papa and mamma acted as if they did not know what had passed. As for Catherine, she did not mind saying out loud that my cousin would break my aunt's heart, and that the best thing to do would be to send him away to college, a hundred miles from his family. When I think of it now, I cannot at all understand Robert's conduct. After all, he is not really bad at heart; and he isn't greedy. I have seen him give away his cakes to the village children. Still, if he had all the other good qualities in the world I never could pardon him for tormenting little girls. It is really and truly a most hateful fault, my dear Robert; since we are stronger than they are, let us protect them. When my sister can't reach a cluster of hazel-nuts, I jump as high as I can, till I succeed in pulling it down for her. If she is afraid of a toad, or a beetle, although her fright appears strange to me, I take it up and throw it a long way from her. Those poor little sisters of ours! it isn't their fault if they are so timid; they do us a great many good turns, which we could not do for them. One day

I cut my finger with my pen-knife ; Catherine was out, and I did not want to trouble mamma, who had visitors. My little sister said to me, —

“ Let me see your finger, brother ; I can tie it up for you.”

“ O but, Marguerite, you won’t know how.”

“ Let me do as I like, Riri.”

And she took one of her doll-rags and made a stall for my finger, and wound some thread around and around it. So my finger did not bleed any more, and the next day it was well.

Marguerite has begun to sew my copy-books together for me, too. She has a thimble. I shall be very glad when she knows how to mend my clothes ; for there doesn’t pass a day that I don’t tear something. I love my little brother Xavier — but Marguerite ! O !

When I am big I shall have a purse of my own ; a real purse, with silver francs and gold pieces in it ; and if I see that my sister wants a ring, or a book, I will go quickly and buy it for her. I will bring her birds and lion-skins from Africa ; as papa does for mamma. And Marguerite will be so pleased !

Dear me ! what is the use of all this fine talk ? I must leave so agreeable a subject, and pass to another. Dear reader, don’t get tired of being indulgent towards me. Don’t condemn me, but be sorry for me ; and if you note my faults and stupidities, let it be only that you may avoid them.



CHAPTER XII.

OF WHICH THE AUTHOR IS NOT AT ALL PROUD.

M. HERSANT got very tired of running after us; and in spite of his sharp eyes we escaped from him often.

One day — O that day! — a man with a puppet-show came into the court-yard of the chateau. He had also a wise dog, who knew how to play at dominoes. We all took turns to play a game with him, but the dog always won.

Robert said he wanted greatly to have that dog. The master replied that he wouldn't give the dog to the Emperor himself — that he was the light of his eyes and the joy of his heart. Papa having paid for the exhibition, the puppets were moved on to the village.

“Let us follow them a little way! Only a little way!” cried Robert, all the time running ahead, and calling back at me for a coward. “What harm will it do? We shall never again see such a comical dog as that, and they will think we are in the billiard room! — O! very well! Don't come if



"A man with a puppet-show came into the court-yard of the chateau."
Page 96.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

you are afraid! As for me, I prefer dominoes to billiards."

O, how cowardly I was! I felt I was doing wrong. Yet I continued to follow after Robert. Every moment I thought I should see M. Hersant coming after us, and I started guiltily.

How could I resist the voice of my conscience which I heard all the time at the bottom of my heart, saying, —

"Riri, go back! there is yet time. They are uneasy about you at home. O! go back, Riri!" An hour had already passed. The boy with the puppets had stopped in a narrow by-path, and he said that we should play at dominoes with the dog if we would pay for it. We had no money. Robert offered him some marbles. He refused them, saying that a dog like Mino was not to be paid in a mean way like that.

"Give me your waistcoat," he said.

Robert took off his; the boy took it from him, played about two minutes, and then ran away with his puppets as fast as he could. Robert ran after him, picked up some stones, and threw them at him. I began to cry. I was afraid; and I thought of home. O! really and truly there is no pleasure in being naughty!

"You cry just like a little girl," said Robert, sneeringly. "What! are you afraid of the sparrows who are chirping around us? We shall be home in an hour. M. Hersant will scold us, and that will be the end of it till the next time."

I was indignant at his tone and language.

"And your mother, and my mamma! Suppose they are searching for us! Suppose they are uneasy about us? Robert, you don't think of anything except of doing as you please; you don't care for anything but yourself. O, I didn't think you were so bad!"

Robert whistled "By the Light of the Moon," and then a moment afterwards he took my arm:

"Let us walk fast. We won't get back in time for dinner."

A wagon now passed us. I proposed to Robert to ask the good man who drove it to take us up with him.

"Get in and ride, if you want to, my dear little fellow! As for me, my legs are strong, and I know my way!" was his angry answer.

I got in and begged him to do so too. He wouldn't do it in spite of all that the wagoner (who, seeing we were the children of the chateau, was anxious to see us safe home) could say to him.

Unhappily the farm-horses don't go as fast as papa's; and it was a long, long hour before we came in sight of the village. I got down, and I had not taken ten steps when I saw all papa's servants, and at their head my aunt and Catherine. They were coming towards us, and as soon as they saw me, they cried out:—

"O! there he is! There is one of them!"

As soon as my aunt saw I was alone, she fell down as if she were dead. They carried her home in a

chair. Papa took me into his arms without scolding me ; I felt his heart beat against me. In spite of the fright I was in, I managed to say at last, " Robert is coming on foot ; he would not get into the cart." Some one ran to carry the news to Catherine, who was taking care of my poor aunt, and papa walked on quickly, still carrying me.

Mamma met us in the park with my sister. Marguerite was crying. Mamma was quite white, but she did not cry at all. She screamed out when she saw me : —

" O my son ! Henri, where have you been ? "

I trembled so that I could not answer. They laid me down on a sofa, and gave me hot linden-leaf tea to drink, and I went to sleep. The next morning I awoke, and found myself in my own bed. When I opened my eyes, I saw mamma at my side. She wasn't any longer pale.

" My dear child," she said, " you see what it costs us to follow bad advice. I know all about it. Robert did not accuse any one but himself."

At the first word that mamma spoke, I began to cry. Marguerite came to kiss me, and she whispered to me in a low tone : —

" He has gone away."

A good night's rest had quite set me up. I was able to get up and go to breakfast with the family.

Mamma did not exactly scold me, but she said to me with a serious air, with which I was well acquainted, —

" My dear child, you have been able to judge of

our anxiety on your account. If you are less to blame than Robert, still you are to blame, and greatly. Your conscience must have told you that you were doing wrong. You should have resisted your cousin. You have both of you run a frightful risk. The world is full of terrible stories which all commence with just such an adventure as yours. That puppet-player might have carried you off, and made you become rope-dancers. You would have been lost to yourselves and to us. In place of being taken care of, and well brought up and educated, you would have been beaten, probably, just as they have beaten the dog to make him learn to play at dominoes. Promise me, my dear child, to try never again to follow bad advice. You ought to be willing to obey unconditionally without asking the why or the wherefore. We your parents have been children before you, and we have had to be warned and admonished just as we warn and admonish you. A mother, Henri, wants to see her child always happy, and if she refuses him anything, or deprives him of any pleasure, it is because she knows of some unseen danger to which he would be exposed."

I promised mamma that she should never again have to reproach me upon a similar occasion. I have kept my word. Then mamma took my head between her hands, and caressed me a little. I knew it for a sign of contentment on her part. I knew she was thinking to herself, though she did not say it out loud, something like this : —

“Dear God ! I thank thee for having restored him to me !”

As soon as Marguerite was alone with me, she told me how papa had declared that Robert must be sent away to college. My aunt had cried a great deal over it ; but it having been so decided, papa had gone away that morning with poor Robert.

I had enough to think of, turning over all that had happened in my mind ; and although my thoughts were not pleasant ones, yet I could not prevent them from coming back again and again. Robert, the dog, the dominoes, and the puppets rested long in my memory. M. Hersant never left us for an instant after this ; it was an unnecessary precaution, for I had no longer a wish to go outside of the park even.

My presence seemed to suggest painful recollections to my good aunt. Louis was kinder and more tender than ever to her, which often caused her to cry. Little by little my cousin and I took plays up again. We began to speak of Robert also.

One fine morning papa brought us a letter from the director of the college where Robert had been admitted. He said that my cousin's conduct gave him the greatest hopes that thoughtless children were not the worst, and that remorse for some greater fault than usual often led to a change of conduct. My aunt read this letter aloud, but she was not able to read it through — her voice and her eyes were too full of tears. I find that our mammas cry a great deal. I am willing to have

mine cry on the condition that she weeps tears of joy. That is not always so easy.

I am diligent now, but for all that I often have lazy spells. I like to read and to write, but I hate to compose themes, and I hate to make translations. And what do you say as to grammar? What a horrible invention it is! Tell me stories about Hannibal, and Scipio, and Alexander, — there you have something interesting and worth listening to.

M. Hersant is very wise. I have found in my books everything that he told us about during our walks of last year.

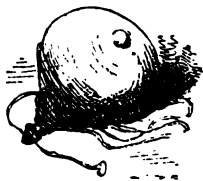
I am strong on my spelling, and as it is such easy work for me, I like to write to my little friends on the least occasion. My writing-desk is well furnished with paper and envelopes. I amuse myself sometimes by writing to my sister. I ask her to tell me about her birds, and I make up little stories for her; otherwise, my pens and paper would lie untouched.

Noel and Paul say that they will write to me when they grow up. But now Paul scorns writing, because he has had a little printing press, with bottles of ink of all colors given to him. He is all the time sending me invitations of all sorts. He has promised me, too, some visiting cards for New Year's Day.

We learn geography after an amusing fashion. M. Hersant, whom I grow to love more and more, draws on the sand the shape of islands and peninsulas, and heaps up mountains of it. But the pret-

tiest thing is, that he lets us dig gutters in the sand to imitate rivers, seas, gulfs, and straits. All this costs us a little work and a great deal of pleasure. M. Hersant is so good! He has planned a gymnasium for us, and he is going to give lessons to Marguerite and me. We shall learn to swing in the air, climb up the poles, and go from one rope to another. O, I should be wild with happiness at the thought of it, but that Louis, my gentle cousin, is going away. Ah! if Xavier could only get big all at once! I can't at all remember ever having been so little as he is.

My dear good aunt has gone to Lyons. She fretted herself, because she could not see Robert. Papa did not let her go alone. He is very good, is papa! I was so sorry to see Louis go away, that I even gave him my big top, and now I wish I had another.





CHAPTER XIII.

A MOMENT OF ERROR. — SEVERAL REMARKABLE EVENTS.

As long as I had my cousin to play with me, I did not notice that Marguerite passed nearly all her play hours with Xavier. I became jealous of this new friendship. How could she prefer a little fellow like that to myself, who can talk without stammering, who can run about and play at blowing soap-bubbles! It seemed a grave offense to me. I grew enraged every time I saw Marguerite leaping and dancing around my little brother to gain a smile from him. I thought her ungrateful and capricious.

However, my anger against the innocent Xavier did not go so far as to cause me to refuse to take a part in his repasts, as was my usual custom. I knew very well the hour when Catherine brought his bowl of pap into the nursery. The liquid at the top was always poured off first for Xavier, and what was left at the bottom of the dish was for Marguerite and myself, as a sort of treat. We used

to arm ourselves with spoons and make a spirited attack on the bowl, and often the crossing of our weapons could be heard within it. If my sister had been as greedy as myself, more than one combat would have taken place at the bottom of the bowl. But it was not easy to quarrel with gentle Marguerite, and only a bad boy like her brother could ever have found occasion for doing so.

One day, my sister came out on the terrace where I was amusing myself by frightening the lizards when they peeped out of their holes. She had on a pretty new blue dress which mamma had embroidered for her. Her black curls fell down upon her shoulders, her short skirt showed her pretty little feet in neat fitting boots, and in spite of her unaffected manner, I said to her, wickedly wishing to tease her, — that all little girls were vain and fond of dress. Marguerite thought I was jesting, and asked me if I didn't think her dress was pretty.

"What do boys know about girls' dresses? Your green dress is just like all other green dresses," I rejoined, with an air of indifference.

"My green dress! O Riri, you are doing it on purpose! My dress is as blue as the sky, and you see very well that it is so."

I discovered all at once that my sister was teased by my remarks, and so I was tempted to continue in the same bantering strain, accusing little girls of vanity and coquetry. At last we began to dispute.

"Ah yes, brother!" she exclaimed at last.

“And what do you say to a little boy who cannot sleep for joy, when he has a new velvet jacket, and who torments his nurse a dozen times a day about the tying of his cravat? Who uses a doll’s comb on the sly to make a nice side parting of his hair, and who puts pomade on it, —all the time looking at himself in the glass. Yes, sir! I know a little boy who does all that!”

My sister blushed at seeing mamma, who had been listening to us unperceived; and I was still more ashamed of myself.

“I have heard all,” said mamma, “and although Henri is wrong, Marguerite is not right. She should have been satisfied with telling her brother that she did not think any more of a blue dress than of a green one. Then she would have told the truth. But I do not know why it is the custom to lay upon little girls a fault from which little boys are in no way exempt. Vanity is as ridiculous when displayed by the latter, as it is when displayed by the former. What is there in a velvet jacket, or an embroidered dress, if it is not worn by a good and amiable child? I have seen little boys very proud of their dress sometimes; they thought everybody was admiring them, while in reality there was but one thing about them that attracted attention, and that was their dirty hands! Children,” continued mamma, “don’t quarrel about little things, it will weaken your affection for one another; nothing is more charming to see than Riri and his sister together when they are good friends.”

We kissed each other, without waiting to be told to do so by mamma; and as Marguerite is gentler than I am, we did not quarrel any more, or at least if we did it was on such small matters as are not worth mentioning here. I hope you will forget that we had even one quarrel, and love us both all the same; and I will quickly turn the page, and speak of more agreeable things.

One evening we were in the *salon*, when mamma said to us, — “Children, our overseer has asked that you should be godfather and godmother to his granddaughter. I have accepted for you, being well persuaded that you would be glad to do a service for these worthy people.”

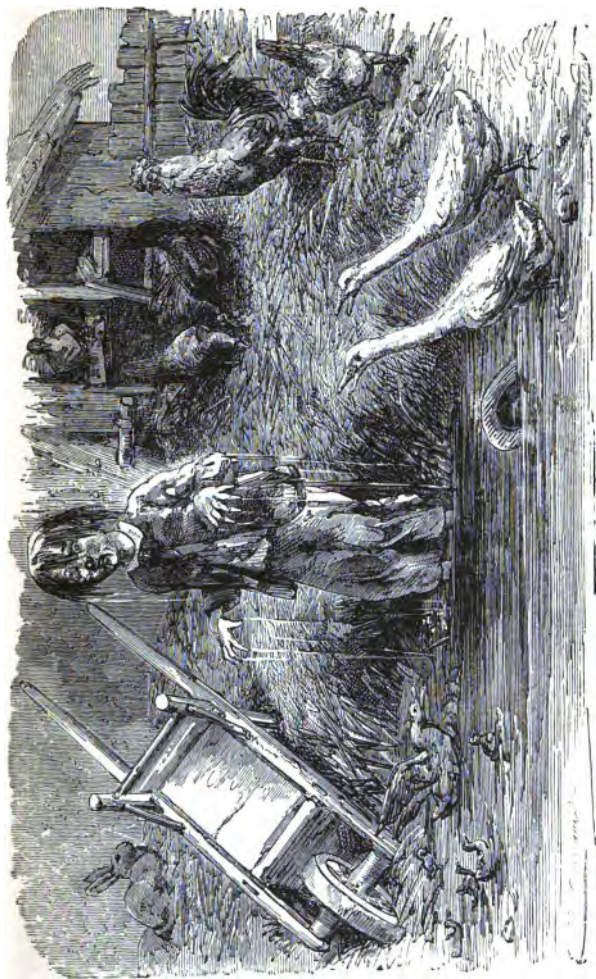
The word “service” affected us very little in comparison with the idea of the pleasure it would be to name a godchild. For I must tell you that we had been greatly surprised, Marguerite and I, at not having been preferred to our aunts and our old uncle, at the baptism of my little brother.

The next day we were taken to see our godchild, that was to be. After we had ransacked the whole calendar for a suitable patron-saint, we determined to call her Marguerite Henrietta; hoping that she would always be called by both her names in full — which seemed to us the most beautiful of names, after that of Anna, which is mamma’s. We were told that we must love our godchild, take an interest in her, and protect her throughout our lives. We didn’t wish for anything better. Marguerite was full of the idea of making her clothes, — you know

my sister has a thimble and needles, — but I have more confidence in the skill and the needles of Catherine. As for me, I will play with my god-daughter ; and when I get big I will make her presents, and give her good advice, as papa and mamma do to the little girls of their charity school.

One day, not long afterwards, Catherine dressed us very prettily to go to the village church, where our goddaughter was to be baptized. Although I had maintained to my sister that boys are not vain, the truth forces me to admit that I am sometimes so ; and I was thinking a great deal about my dress on that particular day. But it was Catherine's fault more than mine, I think. My dear nurse had dressed me in a new blue jacket with buttons — O, so many buttons, that I couldn't count them all. We set out with papa and mamma ; I was delighted to think of being a godfather, and to look so well. When we arrived in the farm-yard, I made a false step in descending from the carriage, and I fell with my nose in a mud-puddle, which didn't smell of cologne, as I used to say when I was little. O dear me ! I wasn't proud any longer ! Papa and mamma didn't think of anything but to find out whether I was hurt or not ; and as for me, I didn't think of anything but my jacket and my trousers !

I was not to be consoled, even by the momentary importance which I acquired under these trying circumstances ; the farmer, his children, and the servants crowded around me ; every one wanted to help to wipe the mud from me, or perform some



“O dear me! I wasn't proud any longer!” Page 110.

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other kind office. When it was quite found out that I was not hurt, everybody laughed except myself. Marguerite did not laugh much, but she couldn't help smiling a little.

Papa said that the baptism could not be put off on account of my mishap, and that I must be dressed in a suit of little Pierre's clothes; as he was just my age, but much larger and stronger.

My pride having had such a grievous fall, I should certainly have cried, if my good little sister had not taken the fancy to persuade me that she too wanted to be dressed in peasant's clothes. She called me Master Pierre, and asked me about my sheep; and said all sorts of droll things to make me laugh; it was a great deal, however, to have kept me from crying, when I saw myself looking so awkward in Pierre's clothes.

I took my part in the ceremony at church with the best grace that I could muster. Mamma was well pleased with our behavior. We did not make any mistakes, and we were even quite serious, for we understood well that a baptism was not an affair merely of sugar-plums. Our godchild was ugly, and this troubled Marguerite; but mamma promised that we should find she had become prettier in six months; and it has come about just as she said it would. Marguerite Henrietta has now pretty rosy cheeks, and fine blue eyes. She screams at us in a pretty little way; and laughs such queer little baby laughs, whenever we go to see her. She walks alone now, and when her mother brings her

up to the chateau we have nice times playing with her. She is a very interesting child.

One day, when I was nearly eight years old, papa said to mamma, —

“Henri is too old to wear his hair in curls any longer ; he must have it cut in a manner more becoming to a boy of his age.”

Mamma did not answer, so nothing more was said about the matter. A month afterwards, a celebrated painter came to us in the country, to paint our portraits. I guessed that mamma liked best to have my hair curled, and that she wanted to have me painted with it so, that she might have something to remind her, long after my curls should be cut off, of how I had looked. Everybody said that our portraits were successful. They were painted in oil. I held in my arms Zephyr, a little greyhound, which papa used to take with him when he went into garrison. Marguerite was indignant when some one proposed that she should be painted holding a doll ; and snatched up Catherine's cat, which happened to be passing at the moment. It musn't be inferred, however, that we went at it, cat and dog.

My nurse was delighted at the idea of having Minette's portrait taken. Minette is the cat's name.

If the reader wants to see us, as we were painted, he must come to St. Jean, — during the summer for instance, — we will receive him with all due honor. After my portrait was finished, papa and mamma took me to the best hair-dresser that there was near us. Mamma wanted to be there when my hair was

cut. Catherine said it was a martyrdom to cut off her cherub's curls, meaning mine. Well, they were cut off, and so closely that my head was nearly bare.

Mamma saved them up as if they had been precious things. She had a bracelet made out of some of them for herself. The rest she gave away to four old ladies of her acquaintance; who had false fronts made out of them. I didn't recognize those old ladies the first time that I saw them wearing my light hair; because they had been used to wear black wigs before that. But I'm sure I'm very well contented to have my hair done up in curl papers, when it is on some other person's head and not on my own. I studied diligently now. M. Hersant was satisfied with me. I very seldom got any bad marks. I liked to listen to my tutor, whose conversation instructed me much.

It was well that I could be interested in it, for Paul and Noel were but temporary play-fellows, and Marguerite now hardly ever left mamma; besides, she still continued as infatuated as ever about Xavier. I had ceased to be jealous — to my greater comfort. O how tiresome it is to be jealous! We are silent and unhappy. We mope in a corner, and look out grudgingly, to see if anything pleasant happens to our brothers and sisters. Then we feel injured because all the good things are not for us exclusively. If I should ever see my little brother showing marks of jealousy, I will tell him how miserable it made me, and how ashamed I was of

such an ugly fault. And then to be jealous of one's own little sister! that's the worst of all. But I have gotten over that, and now I want Marguerite always to be the happiest and the most beautiful of little girls! I am beginning to give her my arm when we walk through the town.

In the country we both go out, running and jumping together; but if there is a brook to cross, I help her over it, and I get her the finest mulberries out of the hedges. She is never afraid that I shall play her naughty tricks, for I am her protector.

Papa was so well satisfied with me, that he asked me what I should like to have for my New Year's gift, aside from my usual toys and bonbons.

"A pair of boots! O give me a pair of boots!" I cried out in a transport of joyous expectation. Unfortunately, I only got laughed at for my grand pretensions, and had to moderate my demands and be satisfied with the promise of a cane.

Ever since my hair had been cut short, I believed myself a little man, and I wanted to give myself as much of an air of importance as possible. My cane served me admirably in this respect. I would make it resound on the tiles of the vestibule, when we were going out to walk; and on the way, it was precious for the purpose of filliping aside even the smallest pebble which came in the way of Marguerite's feet; and I used it for reaching the branches which grew too high for me, and for stirring up the waters of the brook. Indeed, I was

always inventing obstacles for the pleasure of vanquishing them with my cane ! No present that I had ever received, with the exception of my leaden soldiers, had given me so much pleasure.

Seeing how much Marguerite envied me my cane, I used to lend it to her sometimes. At last I got the idea of making her one after my own fashion, and as well as I could ; and it used to please us so much to use our canes when climbing the mountains together !





CHAPTER XIV.

THE HISTORY OF A TOOTH.

ONE day at breakfast I said, "Look! I have a loose tooth!" and I touched it to show that it was nearly ready to fall out of my mouth. Mamma wanted to tie a thread around it and pull it out; but I, all at once forgetting my title of colonel, which I still prided myself on assuming from time to time, began to cry. Papa made sport of me, all the time laughing, because he supposed that I would be willing to let mamma pull the tooth out for me. But when he saw how cowardly I really was, he began to be provoked, and mamma also. Marguerite began to feel all her teeth to see if there was a loose one among them; for my good little sister would have willingly submitted to have a tooth pulled out for the sake of encouraging me to follow her example.

Reasoning and promises were alike useless; and at last they shut me up in a closet which had a little window in it. Underneath this window Marguerite came, and held forth in arguments whose

eloquence would have touched a boy with the least grain of courage or common sense, so at least she seemed to think ; for at the end of each discourse she would say, —

“ Now, Riri, have you made up your mind ; and shall I go and look for mamma ? ”

But I cried, and said “ No.”

Catherine came also to talk to me, without having any better success. After coming and going a good many times, Marguerite finished by leaving me. I got tired of being shut up. My tooth hardly held on ; I knew very well that mamma would not hurt her little boy any more than she could help, and that her delicate fingers would pull the thread gently. I even said to myself that for a French soldier I was really very cowardly. I owe it to the reader to tell him the whole truth. I have noticed that little boys find it hard to say “ Yes,” when they have once said “ No.” Isn’t that what is called obstinacy — the most foolish of all foolish faults ?

Now I believe there was obstinacy in my resistance ; and although it is such an ugly fault, I had rather think that I was influenced by it, rather than by the fear of suffering a little, since a man should always be brave.

I said to myself, “ How dull it is ! There has been time enough since I have been in here to pull out all the milk teeth of a whole school of boys.” I cried, and I worked myself up into a passion.

“ But little booby ! ” cries my dear reader, “ why did you not call out ? They would have come as

soon as they knew you were ready." But I was guilty of another foolishness, for my wounded self-love hindered me from calling my sister, with whose desertion I was offended.

It is a very salutary exercise to write one's memoirs. You *iron yourself out*, as it were ; and you recall how very naughty and ridiculous you have been. And the moral which a little boy can draw for himself by so doing is worth all other moral lessons.

After an hour of despairing silence, I heard Marguerite's gentle voice outside.

"O brother ! brother ! A large coop full of chickens has just come ! There are black ones with white top-knots. You would think their heads had been dressed by a hair-dresser ! Then there are other wee little ones — all white with ruffles around their claws. O Riri ! make up your mind to have your tooth pulled out. I can't have any pleasure in looking at the pretty chickens when you are not with me to see them too. Papa and mamma won't give up to you. You will have to stay shut up, and it is bad to give one's parents so much trouble for nothing."

O shame ! it was curiosity which triumphed over my obstinacy, — at least I am afraid so, for it seems to me that a good little boy would have yielded all at once to give pleasure to his papa and mamma.

Marguerite opened the door of the closet, and took me to mamma. My entry was not made with

any of the honors. I came as the conquered, not as the conqueror.

"Colonel," said mamma, taking a thread; "come! it won't be very long!"

But behold! while she was tying the thread around it, the tooth came out in her hand. I burst out laughing and ran away. I own that I deserved richly to be laughed at, and that my sister would have been much more courageous than myself. I strongly advise the reader to allow his milk teeth to be pulled out without making any fuss about it. It is nothing at all; and he will gain the reputation of being a courageous child, with very little trouble to himself; and if he should ever write his memoirs, he will be able to present to his contemporaries a chapter much more brilliant than the present one. My sister was right to persuade me to come out of that ugly closet, where I found it so dull! My tears were soon dried at the sight of those splendid chickens! Marguerite had forgotten to tell me about the yellow hens and the black roosters, with glossy *changeable* feathers of blue and green. A pretty house, with a little pleasure ground awaited the beautiful strangers. During the first few days after they came, all our play hours were passed in throwing bread and in laughing at the combats which our generosity excited. People came from a distance to see our magnificent fowls. Everybody did them justice except Catherine; and if she was to be believed, all the most extraordinary chickens in the world were nothing to those she

had raised in her native place the Flèche. And when papa wanted to tease her, he would speak slightly of the fowls of the Flèche. But he loves Catherine and respects her too, for all that. My nurse isn't rich. Papa is, and that is about the same thing, for Catherine will never want for anything; and when she can't work any more, she will rest herself, and we will take care of her. O! she is the best nurse in the world is my nurse, I can tell you so much!





“‘Colonel,’ said mamma taking a thread.” Page 121.

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CHAPTER XV.

LEARNING ENGLISH.

"I HAVE something to tell you, brother," said Marguerite to me one day. "O you don't know! I am to have an English governess to teach me English. You will learn it, too; and we can talk together, and no one will understand us. Wouldn't you like it?"

"I have a woman to teach me! No, indeed, never! That is only good for little girls."

"But I learn from M. Hersant," she said.

"That is different," said I.

Fortunately my dear Marguerite was satisfied with my "that is different," and did not press me further on the subject. If she had done so, I should have been greatly embarrassed to define in what the difference consisted.

There are times when I am provoking in spite of myself, or rather, when I have not the courage to be amiable—for I feel that I could be so if I would.

I was impatient to see Miss Arabella. I am naturally of a curious disposition, and so I am

always glad when strangers or visitors come to the house. Marguerite talked to me incessantly of the arrival of the governess.

“What do you think she will be like, Henri?”

And I, for the sake of sport and to torment her, would draw the most frightful portraits of the prospective governess. One day I would describe the poor lady as being tall like a poplar, with long arms, and teeth like a donkey's. The next day I would have her so little that we could have put her into Xavier's cradle.

At last Miss Arabella came, and happily for us and for her she wasn't at all like my portraits. She pleased me at once, for she had the appearance of being modest and good. But I took great care not to say so to Marguerite. My sister was delighted to have near her a person so entirely devoted to her, who would teach her English, and join in all her plays.

I have forgotten to tell you that I am very proud, so Catherine used to say. For my part I call it obstinacy, as you have already seen. If I am requested to do a thing, I sometimes try to give myself an air of importance by refusing; and the more I am begged, the more I refuse. In this way I have often deprived myself of many advantages. It was doubtless, on account of this peculiarity of mine, that mamma and papa did not propose to me that I should study English. And I greatly wished to do so, and was greatly disappointed that they did not tell me that I was to study with Marguerite.

When I heard my sister speaking her little sentences in English to her governess, I thought it very amusing, and I thought it would be very much more amusing if we could both talk it together, but my pride kept me silent.

Mamma, as I have told you, understands everything; and I am persuaded that it was she who prompted Marguerite to give me little lessons in English quite unbeknown to anybody else.

O how good my sister is! The wish to teach me caused her to be still more diligent at her lessons. When we were alone in the garden, she used to teach me what she had learned.

One day she said to me, —

“Brother, I have an idea — a splendid idea! In two months it will be mamma’s birthday, and you must make your congratulations to her in English!”

“And present her with some English grass too?”
I said banteringly.

“Now, Henri, listen, and don’t jest! My idea is a pretty one. I will teach you a little fable, and you shall recite it to Miss Arabella, to make sure that there is no fault in it. On that day we will talk English at breakfast and at dinner, and Peter will not understand us when we ask him for the bread!”

Ah! what will you think of me? For you must know that the tempting perspective placed before me of astonishing Peter, and playing him a trick, contributed greatly to induce me to accept my sister’s proposition.

Behold us, then, studying English during play-

time. Sometimes, as if by chance, Miss Arabella would come upon us so engaged; and she would correct me in the most indifferent manner, never even stopping in her embroidery.

My predilections towards the English language were astonishing — I repeat, ladies and gentlemen, astonishing; and the proof of this is that to-day I can chatter away in English as freely as I can in French, and it is only eighteen months since my sister began to teach me!

Those two months, of which Marguerite spoke, passed as quickly as any of the others; and on St. Anne's day, at nine o'clock in the morning, Marguerite and I entered mamma's room — I carrying in my hand a large bouquet of roses.

My sister had taught me how to speak — with the assistance of Miss Arabella, to whom I had become entirely reconciled — a pretty complimentary phrase. I knew it well by heart, but all at once I was seized with an impulse to show my independence of set words, and I found it more to my liking to say abruptly to mamma in English, "I love you!"

These three words produced an astonishing effect. Mamma, far from suspecting our secret, thought that I wished to let her know that I would like to learn English by thus addressing her in the only three words which she supposed that I knew correctly. Judge, then, of her surprise, and of that of papa, when I recited to them, without missing a single word, and with an accent which caused Miss Arabella to smile, the following lines: —



“Marguerite and I entered mamma’s room.” Page 123.

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THE SHEEP.

"Lazy sheep, pray tell me why
In the pleasant fields you lie,
Eating grass and daisies white,
From the morning till the night?
Everything can something do,
But what kind of use are you?"

"Nay, my little master nay!
Do not serve me so, I pray.
Don't you see the wool that grows
On my back, to make you clothes?
Cold and very cold you'd get,
If I did not give you it.

"True, it seems a pleasant thing
To nip daisies in the spring;
But many chilly nights I pass
On the cold and dewy grass,
Or pick a scanty dinner where
All the common's brown and bare.

"Then the farmer comes at last,
When the pleasant spring is past,
And cuts my woolly coat away,
To warm you in the winter's day.
Little master, this is why
In the pleasant fields I lie!"

O how glad papa was! He patted me on the cheeks, called me his good little boy, and promised to take me to England. But I didn't need such a promise to make me happy. When one has done right, one's feelings are the best reward.





CHAPTER XVI.

PLEASURES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS.

OUR godchild's mother brought us a little lamb. How pleased we were! He nibbled at the grass while we watched him; he would lift up his head and look at us, and say baa! Marguerite put a pink ribbon round his neck and tied a little bell to it. The new comer was the object of all our cares. I don't think he liked my sister to comb his wool; but he followed us about like a pet dog. I wanted to give him a name, but Marguerite told me she didn't think we would find one prettier than the simple word *Lamb*. I gave up to her, so we only called him our Lamb. Xavier soon found out the difference between our lamb and his own pasteboard sheep. After having been a little frightened mutually, the one by the other, Xavier and Lamb finished by becoming good friends, and they used to have little frolics together which amused the rest of us greatly.

As we grew older, Marguerite and I used to find pleasure in acting out stories which we invented

for ourselves. We used to make believe that instead of being the children of papa and mamma, we were poor little peasants, working for our living.

One day we decided to be a little shepherd and shepherdess.

"You see," said Marguerite, "we must be always together, because I shall be afraid of the wild beasts. I will have my knitting, and you will make baskets of willow branches, and cages, too; and while you are at work near me, you will sing. At night I will make everything comfortable in our cabin and get your soup ready for you."

If unfortunately I appeared to turn up my nose at the idea of my sister's soup, she would feel aggrieved at once.

At another time we would play at being traveling peddlers. We pretended that everybody loved us and bought our wares, and that it was a great joy to us to bring the money we had earned to our parents. For although Marguerite was so ambitious of doing all the housekeeping, she never renounced the idea of having a good mother who loved her dearly.

I used to be greatly amused by the histories which Marguerite would invent of her own accord, and quite unaided.

It is surprising how troubles come at the very moment when we are the least expecting them. Did you ever notice it?

We were all happy, and we were enjoying splendid weather. It was the season for nut gathering,

and we went chestnut hunting and were having grand times, when M. Hersant was taken ill. It was very much against his will to be in bed, leaving me to study alone, except when I was under the care of Miss Arabella whom I had grown to love much. Papa thought, as did everybody else, that M. Hersant would get well quickly. But the reverse of that was to happen. Then, as we had to leave the country soon, mamma took the idea of sending me to a school in Lyons, as I was learning nothing at home except English, with which I got along very well.

This news did not please me at all, as you may guess. Papa said to me : —

“ My boy, you have been good so far, and I hope that now you will not pain your tutor by taking advantage of his illness to show yourself disobedient. You have often said that you love him. Very well ; now you must give him a proof of it. Perhaps you will have to pass a month away from home.” I began to cry. “ You will have pleasant comrades to play with ; I will go to see you, and the time will soon pass. For the rest, a boy of eight years old ought to begin to show some courage ! ”

I snuffled, instead of answering.

“ Come, now,” continued papa, “ you are going to be a good child, I know ; and for your reward I will have your trunk sent to the stage, and we will ride together on horseback to the town, instead of going with the trunk, as if we were both grown up men. Shall we not, Henri ? ”

After having such a glorious idea presented to my imagination I felt very little regret at leaving home. To ride side by side with papa, just as if I were a man! — O it was glorious to think of!

It was very different with Marguerite; she complained so much about my going away that mamma had to scold her. After that she didn't say anything more.

The next day I went away on horseback without crying. I had my cane too!

The classes at my school had not yet been formed when I entered. There were already fifteen scholars — the youngest ones and those destined for the middle classes. Some of them lived at a great distance, so they had remained at the school during the vacation; others had been obliged to pass the vacation at school as a punishment for bad behavior. The house was large and beautiful; there was a great play-ground planted with trees, where we played during the hours of recreation. I was well received by the teacher, and I found, to my great surprise, that I was not so unhappy at quitting papa as I had thought I should be. I suppose it was because he managed so as to bring me and leave me during play hours; so that I began my school life by playing! I hadn't been a minute in the play-ground before I noticed a little boy, who was pale and fair-haired, and something taller than myself, but not much. He watched us; but the other boys took no notice of him.

I asked one of the boys why the one that I have

described did not play with the others. "O, nobody likes him!" was the answer.

"Why not?" I said; "poor fellow, he looks so sad."

"He is English. He doesn't know how to say four words of French, and he stares up at the sky as if he expected it would rain down the French language for his benefit."

"Is he just arrived — like myself?"

"He? He has been here three months, and as yet nobody knows where he came from. No one likes him."

"Is he bad?" I persisted.

"Nobody knows," was the indifferent reply.

The English boy saw that we were talking of him. He reddened, and began to stride about with his hands in his pockets. I said no more, but I passed all the English that I knew under review in my own mind. I seemed to see Miss Arabella and Marguerite, and my dictionary and my English grammar.

After a moment's hesitation I gathered up my courage. The boys were just beginning to play with a large top, taking turns to spin it; but I resisted the temptation and went straight up to the poor neglected fellow. I could very well write down in English our conversation just as it took place, if I chose; but if my reader doesn't understand English he would not care about it. It will be more modest of me, therefore, to write it in French — and what is more I shall not have any criticisms to fear upon the quality of my English.

“Would you like to talk to me? I know a little English.”

Cyril grew red with pleasure and surprise, and gave me his hand.

“What pleasure!” he cried. “But they will detest you, if you take up with me.”

“Why so?”

“Because they don’t like the English. They make sport of me, and they would fight me if they dared. But just let them come on!” and Cyril doubled up his fists.

“O! I am not afraid of them, either. My papa is a colonel, and I shall be a soldier too.” I knew I was not talking good English, and I hesitated.

“O! don’t be afraid to talk it,” cried Cyril; “I will not laugh at you; but if you will let me, I will teach you my language and you shall teach me yours.”

The bargain being concluded, we at once fell to work; and although I am not ungrateful, I am obliged to confess that this lesson in English given me by my little comrade, seemed to me much more interesting than those I had received from Miss Arabella — even when my sister was of the party. But that which gave me a dearer pleasure, hitherto unknown, and made the lesson still more acceptable, was the thought of being able to console and brighten up this poor, lonely little boy.

From that day I felt that a change had come over me. I thought of all the blessings I possessed, of papa, mamma, my sister, Xavier, Catherine, and

our country home. And then I thought of poor Cyril, whose circumstances were so different, whose life was so loveless and lonely, and while I felt more thankful than ever before for all the good things that made my life bright, I loved Cyril better, and was proud to feel that he was dependent on me for his happiness, and proud of loving him. On that first day I said to him, —

“You must forget all that the other boys have done to you.” (I wanted so much to say “thou,” which expresses much more affection in our language than the cold, formal “you,” but as it is not proper in speaking English I repressed myself.) “To-morrow we will play with them.”

“I will do as you wish,” he said.

The next day, during the first recreation, I mounted a stone bench, and held forth to my assembled school-mates in very nearly the following words : —

“Gentlemen, I have some news to tell you. Cyril is my friend (great sensation), and I am going to tell you why. When I saw him left all alone by the rest of you, I thought that I should be very unhappy if I were in his place. Besides, I have been studying English with my sister for six months past, and I have decided, since I can talk to him in his own language, that we ought to amuse ourselves together, while at the same time we are useful to each other. When we grow up, we Frenchmen will fight the English if there should be a war. But at present let us all play peaceably together, French



**"I mounted a stone bench, and held forth to my school-mates."
Page 138.**

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boys and English boys. Let it be all the same now!"

The tide of opinion was at once turned. The boys cheered me, and when I took Cyril by the hand, they all rushed upon him, and began to embrace him enthusiastically. There was a scuffle as to who should be foremost to offer him marbles and barley-sugar.

I felt grand at that moment, although I had neither boots nor cane, which last I always considered so essential to the dignity of my appearance on important occasions. But I felt at heart a contentment which I shall never forget, even if I should live to be very old, like Xavier's godfather.

Papa came to see me the next day, and you may be sure I did not forget to speak to him of my friend Cyril. Papa praised my conduct, and called me a brave boy, and predicted that my new friend would never forget what I had done for him. Then he laughed, and asked me if I were sorry that I had studied English with a woman.

Cyril was now quite another boy. He ran about and played, and he began to speak a few words of French; for now that no one dared to mock his imperfect pronunciation, he was less timid. His cheeks began to grow rosy — he had been so pale before! And everybody said that perhaps if it had not been for me, he would have died of being neglected and abandoned. We played a great deal together, but this did not prevent us from often talking confidentially to each other. And when

Cyril saw that I was beginning to understand him well, he told me how it had come about that he had been sent to Lyons.

"I have a papa, too," said my friend to me, "only he is in India — very far away. I will show you India on the map. So he cannot send for me to come to him. Mamma died the day that I was born. Elizabeth, the oldest of my two sisters, brought me up, but now she is married to Captain Héliot. I wanted, O so much ! to go to India with my papa and my sister, but the doctor would not allow it ; he said I was too feeble to bear the voyage ; and as papa knew a gentleman and his wife living in this place, he thought it best to put me to school here, where there would be some one to take an interest in me. But unfortunately M. and Madame Cernay are very old, and are always sick. They cannot have me out of school to visit them. Sometimes Madame Cernay brings me cakes, but what good does that do me ?

"Before thy arrival, Henri" (it had been decided that, in spite of the rules of language, we should "thee" and "thou" each other), "I used to cry every day, and sometimes at night too. There is a word that you speak without knowing its meaning — '*home*.' You don't know how unhappy one is when one has no *home*. It is your house, — your father's house with all that is in it, — the things, and the faces that you have been used to seeing ever since you can remember. Your country is very beautiful, but my *home* is not in it. It is beau-

tiful, but it is not like my country. I want to see the ocean with the great ships upon it. I want to hear English spoken by English tongues, and with the dear home accent. O! when papa comes back from India, I shall go to England again! But we shall always love each other just the same, shall we not, Henri? What difference does it make whether we are French or English, if the heart is right? As for me, I shall never forget you."

"Nor I you, Cyril. And while you are waiting for your father to come home from England, you must come and live with us. You will see how good papa and mamma are, and how pretty and amiable Marguerite is. And Miss Arabella shall make tea for you, and cut your slices of bread and butter, which will remind you of *home*. O Cyril! I know you will be happy with us!"

While I consoled my friend, he in his turn kept me from getting homesick, as I should have done without him. Far from getting tired of school, I began to like it in his company. I began to learn some English games. Most of them are like our own, though with different names. A new one, which I had never played before, was called *croquet*. I will try to tell you what it is like. Stout iron wires, bent into the form of a bow, two ends driven into the ground, are placed at regular distances from each other, on a long, level space of ground. These are the wickets. There are wooden balls which are driven through these wickets with a wooden mallet; and the player who can first drive

his own ball straight through every one of these wickets, without missing, wins the game. But it is not so easy to do as it looks, because the others, — that is the *enemy* — are on the look-out to knock your ball away and get ahead of you. In England, this game is called "little boys' billiards." Croquet had a great success among us, perhaps on account of its novelty.

Then there was the game of foot-ball, in which the player strikes the ball with the foot. The amusing part of this game is, that one falls down sometimes. Hare and hounds is a chase. The hare or rabbit, personated by the boy on whom the lot falls, is tracked and pursued by the hunters and hounds. When there are a good many make-believe dogs and huntsmen, and when the hunter's horn is imitated by a trumpet, the game is very animated and amusing, provided that you don't have to be the hare too long at a time.

Being now so pleasantly situated, I thought of Marguerite without regretting our separation. I got on very well without her. Dear little sister, forgive me for this confession! I love you enough to be candid, though it costs me an effort. But what I am still sorriest for, whenever I think of it, is that I forgot to write to you the first, as I had promised you I would! Therefore I felt much ashamed of myself when papa brought me a letter from my sister.

She had taken for the occasion a sheet of her prettiest note paper; her letter was sealed with

red wax, and mamma had lent her seal to Marguerite to seal it with. Since I have treasured up that letter in my green portfolio, — wait a little while, and I will go and look for it, — Marguerite won't be sorry to find it in my memoirs.

MY SISTER'S LETTER.

“CHATEAU DE SAINT-JEAN, 29th September.

“MY DEAR RIRI : — I have been a little disappointed in not receiving a letter from you, but then I said to myself that I ought to be contented, for I know that if you were unhappy you would very soon write and tell me all about it, — wouldn't you, Riri ? — so I reason with myself that you are happy, and I ought to be content, even if you do not write. I figure to myself, that after studying hard you want to play, and when you are done playing you are tired, and that is the reason you haven't found time to write to me yet — isn't it ?

“As for me, I am very lonesome without you.

“I should like it so much better if we could take turns at feeding the chickens and the ducks, as we would do if you were here, rather than to do it all myself, though I like so much to do it.

“Papa has told us about your friend. I would so much like to see him. When we go to stay in town mamma will have him come home to us. How good mamma is ! It seems that you are behaving yourself splendidly, and M. Hersant is very happy over it. We talk a great deal about you ; I think if I were away from home I should like to be talked

about too. Lamb is very well, but I think he seems a little sad. The wind has blown the leaves from the trees into great heaps and it is nice to feel one's feet buried in them as one walks along, and hear the noise one makes in scattering them on all sides. Catherine says the cold weather gives her the rheumatism when *you* are not here. I went with her yesterday to gather apples in the orchard. There are a great many, some great big ones, and some tiny little ones. I gather the chestnuts now and roast them for my *gouter*.¹

"Good-by, my dear little brother; I love you more and more.

"Your sister for life,

"MARGUERITE."

I read this letter to Cyril, who was greatly rejoiced at the idea of making Marguerite's acquaintance. I am not sure that Marguerite has kept my answer to this letter, so I won't risk asking her for it; moreover, my letter wasn't a pretty one like hers. I wrote it on the play-ground, on a bench, while my top was spinning. I confess this so that the reader may have no misplaced regrets because it isn't forthcoming.

I might avoid telling you some things that are not quite to my credit, but I don't want to shirk them. I was sorry to quit school and go home. Now what do you think of that? Wasn't it very hard-hearted and ugly of me?

¹ French word for children's lunch.

But then, I loved Cyril so much and I amused myself playing with the other boys ; and although Marguerite is the best of sisters, I can't play at all our games with her. I never would have thought that a month away from home would pass so quickly.

One day during recreation papa came to take me away. I said good-by to all my school-fellows, who were not satisfied to see me go away so soon. Cyril didn't cry, although it was hard work for him to keep from doing so ; but the others had grown to love him, and I left one of them to be his companion in my place.

But as soon as we were in the street I forgot all about my sorrow in leaving school. I was glad to be free again, and to be going to see everybody at home. Papa laughed at my questions, but he didn't read the newspaper in the stage as the father of one of my acquaintances in the country does. Papa reads the newspaper in his library, but when he is with us, he talks and laughs and amuses us.





CHAPTER XVII.

THE RETURN HOME.

MAMMA, Marguerite, Miss Arabella, and Catherine were on the steps of the terrace awaiting our arrival. As I was running forward to embrace my darling little mother, Catherine waylaid and caught me, and so she got the first kiss. Mamma laughed at that. It seemed to me as if I had returned from a long journey. The first thing I did was to go in search of M. Hersant, whom I found in the *salon*. He was very glad to see me, and I to see him. Then Marguerite took me to see the chickens and our lamb. We both chattered away as fast as we could — both speaking at the same time. I talked all sorts of nonsense and did all sorts of nonsensical things on purpose to amuse my sister. Miss Arabella got very bewildered and could not keep up with our wild flow of spirits.

The day wasn't long enough for the answering of all Marguerite's questions. Some of them had to lie over until next day. She wanted so much to see Cyril! The weather was splendid. And so

mamma said that we should have a holiday in honor of my return and that we should go chestnut gathering. O, but it is jolly to go a nutting! And then when our people have gathered the nuts in, there are always some poor persons who come to look among the leaves for the chestnuts that have been lost or scattered.

We found a little girl who was crying because she had pricked her fingers with the burs in gathering the chestnuts. Marguerite tried to squeeze the prickles out of her fingers, and then wiped them with her handkerchief. Then we told her to sit still where she was while we gleaned the chestnuts for her. When we had filled her basket full of the nuts we gave it back to her. She burst into a glad laugh — put her hands before her eyes and peeped at us shyly through her fingers, and laughed again. Marguerite was so pleased with this little girl that she wanted to kiss her; but the little one was shy, and she run away from us, gleefully carrying her basket, now heavily laden with fine large nuts.

I took up my lessons again, and applied myself so diligently that M. Hersant did not know me any more. But I was doing it on purpose, so as not to give him trouble, as he was still weak. But my unusual fit of soberness did not last very long. I soon got at my old scape-grace tricks again.

We were all ready to move into town, when one night there was such a heavy fall of snow that mamma wished to delay our departure. Mamma is very timid about riding in a carriage; and it is more dan-

gerous to ride down the mountain from our home, than it is to ride up to it, especially after a heavy snow. I wasn't sorry to linger a little longer. Marguerite and I amused ourselves with making foot-prints in the snow ; and the gardener's boys made us a great snow man, which did not crumble away for several days. At last we decided to beat him to pieces with my cane ; and we found it fine sport.

Catherine, finding we were so delighted to see the country around us all white, told us one morning while she dressed us, that everybody did not find it such fine sport, and that our farmer had found a poor old woman who would certainly have perished on the mountain, if he had not discovered her.

As soon as we were dressed we ran to mamma to ask her about this poor woman. Mamma told us that the good creature had a husband in the hospital in Grenoble, and not having heard from him for a month, she had become uneasy, and had undertaken, notwithstanding her age, to make the journey to Grenoble on foot. She had been found in the snow, quite exhausted, at ten o'clock, the night before, and had been brought to the chateau.

"Let us go and see her," said mamma.

The poor traveller had been put into one of the spare rooms of the chateau. Mamma had given her a warm flannel waistcoat, and a great fire was burning in the fire-place. When she saw us the poor old woman lifted up her hands and cried out, —

"O mercy of God ! would not one think that I am a great lady, to be treated thus ? O what a bed !



Frank R. Meyers

Cricker

"We found it fine sport." Page 150.

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It does me good to lie in it. And these little children, who have come to see me, — ah, it is true that misfortunes bring their own compensation.”

Never before had we seen such an old woman. The skin of her hands and face was yellow and dry and wrinkled, like parchment. We could not take our eyes off of her.

“Do you think,” said Marguerite, after we had gone out, “that mamma will ever be like that?”

I said “No,” because I saw that the thought pained my sister. But I was not sure of what I said.

One night I was fast asleep, when my sister ran into Catherine’s room, screaming with fright :

“O nurse, nurse ! do you hear ? They are killing somebody ! ”

Catherine took Marguerite in her arms and began to laugh, while she said, —

“My pet, don’t be frightened. That Mr. Somebody would squeal just as loud if you pulled him by the ears. And it is very well to kill him, so that we may have bloodpuddings and sausages.”

“Ah ! ” said Marguerite, very quiet all at once, and lifting her head from Catherine’s shoulder, “then it is the pig.”

Poor Marguerite ! Her heart fluttered like a poor little frightened bird, trying to get out of its cage. My nurse gave her some sugar and water, and watched at her bedside until she went to sleep.

The next day we laughed over Marguerite’s fright ; and when mamma told us that we might

go and see the butcher at work, our joy was at its climax. My sister forgot how she had pitied the pig up to this time. Catherine put an old dress and apron upon her. For Marguerite was to make a sausage, and I a bloodpudding. That day, spent in the kitchen, caused us a peculiar pleasure, which was greater because entirely new to us. We followed everywhere at the heels of the butcher. We watched him cut and chop the meat with as much interest as if he had been showing us a magic lantern. But when he kept his promise, about the sausage-making, and told me to blow into the entrail which he had prepared as a casing for the meat, I was delighted. It was such sport to watch the skin gradually swell out; and Marguerite was not not too nice to press the great bladder, which was a trifle greasy, with her two little hands. Our compassion for the poor pig had quite vanished by the time of the next day's dinner; and my tender-hearted Marguerite even asked our farmer when he should kill another pig!

During these two or three days which had passed so quickly, the snow had almost disappeared. The good old woman, warmed and revived, had again set forth on her journey, and we all left the chateau, except Catherine, who was left behind for a little while to see to the lye-washing.

I had promised Cyril to keep him in mind, but to tell the truth I had not thought much of him, — and I had forgotten him especially on the day when we made the sausage.

But when we got to town, I at once asked papa to take me to see my friend. He said he would take me to the school the next day during the first recreation ; then I wished that to-morrow could come all at once !

As soon as Cyril saw me, he ran to me and threw himself into my arms. He seemed happy and contented, and he spoke French much better than when I had left him. Papa caressed him and told him that he should come to see us.

Eight days afterwards my friend Cyril came to our house. Mamma received him so kindly that he was not abashed. He talked English with Marguerite, and I think his surprise was great on hearing a little French girl speak English fluently. My sister isn't proud. If I had been in her place I know I should have been somewhat stiff and constrained ; but she only blushed prettily while talking to Cyril. As to Miss Arabella, she was as joyous as a bird that finds itself in company with other birds of the same feather. She talked English so fast that my sister had almost as much trouble as I had in understanding her.

Mamma, my dear mamma, had ordered for breakfast whatever she thought would especially please our little English guest, — beefsteak, potatoes, bread and butter, and tea. Miss Arabella cut and buttered slices of bread with an ardor especially Britannic — to our great amusement ; and Cyril caused them to disappear with almost equal celerity. Marguerite played English games with us nearly all

day. Mamma thought that this holiday was worth a month of lessons to us, and we were entirely of her mind on the subject.

Say what you will, the time passes much more quickly when you are at play than when you are at work. And we were all surprised when dinner was announced; and again, when the hour for separation came, the day had seemed shorter to us than other days.

Cyril and I embraced each other when we said good-by, and Marguerite gave Cyril a gentle shake of the hand.

That evening I heard mamma say to papa (you needn't think I was eavesdropping — no indeed!), "I am certain that if the children could only go to England for a month they would speak English perfectly."

"I think so too; but, my dear Anna, art thou" (papa often *thee's* and *thou's* mamma) "not frightened at the idea of the expense? You who are so economical that you will not even treat yourself to a cashmere shawl, do you calculate what this excursion would cost the family?"

"I am not frightened, Georges. Henri and Marguerite would always remember the visit; it would be a great benefit to them, and later they would not forget for want of actual practice the English that they have learned — as happens so often after a foreign language has been acquired at much trouble and expense."

Papa answered, twisting his moustache, the mean

while, — “ Well, there is time enough to think about it.”

I ran and told my sister what I had heard, telling her she must keep it a secret.

I was transported with joy at the hope thus held out of a visit to England, but Marguerite received the news more coldly. The idea of having to cross the Channel frightened her. She said, —

“ O ! I think I would like better to wait and go there when I get big.”

In the mean time, the map of England engrossed all our spare attention ; and I adroitly managed to ask Miss Arabella many questions about her country. She didn't need to be pressed to answer them, and I would listen, looking slyly every now and then at my sister.

This new project occupied our thoughts almost exclusively during eight days, and then, as mamma did not say anything more about it, we finished by letting it drop out of mind.





CHAPTER XVIII.

PAPA'S ILLNESS.

IN place of an excursion, we had soon after this a great trouble. Papa fell sick all at once. O ! how sad the house became ! Mamma didn't think about us any more — we hardly ever saw her. All sorts of projects were invented to divert our attention. On the days when Cyril was let out of school we used to have long walks with him. But most of the time we could not enjoy ourselves at all for thinking of papa.

The doctor came three times a day, and everybody used to send to know how he was. One day an old lady, a friend of mamma's, met us in the Botanical Garden. She embraced us, saying, " Poor little things ! " and made a sign to M. Hersant.

Marguerite began to cry. " O, papa will die ! " she whispered to me.

" O no ! no ! sister."

" Other papas die, and why not ours ? "

Happily M. Hersant, to distract our attention, took us to see the stuffed birds.

And so Marguerite didn't cry any more, but was greatly pleased, for she is so fond of beautiful birds that she would walk a mile any day just to look at one.

I was glad to see that Marguerite was consoled, but the look and manner of the old lady came back to me all the time. I thought how unhappy mamma and ourselves would be if *it* should come to pass. We would have to dress all in black, we should be always crying, and we should not have any papa any more ! I told M. Hersant what I was thinking about. He was surprised. But grown people always try to console children, and so he said, —

“ Very often, my little friend, we give ourselves a great deal of pain in anticipating troubles which do not come to pass. It is possible for your papa to be very sick and yet not die.”

Then he reminded me how one of our farm people had been ill of fever for three months, and now he could go twelve miles afoot.

This consoled me more than all the rest that he said. M. Hersant added that we must be better children than ever, and pray with all our hearts to God for papa, because God refuses nothing to those children who love their parents.

So then I told Marguerite that we must both be wonderfully good, that we might please God ; so that when we asked him to let papa get well he would listen to us.

After our usual prayers in the morning we used

to say other little prayers of our own composition, and in secret. One day mamma surprised us thus behind the curtain in the alcove of Catherine's room. She knelt down between us and put her arms around us, and pressed us to her without speaking. O how pale she was, mamma! She kissed us both, and then went away quickly.

It was more than a month since we had seen our papa, when one morning after breakfast mamma opened the door of his room and made us a sign to come in. Perhaps you will think that we dashed forward like mad children; but we did no such thing. We went into the room as we were bid, walking very softly, but with our hearts beating with repressed excitement.

Papa was in bed. His beard was so long that I did not know him any more. But when he smiled and said "Good morning, my little children; I shall soon be well now!" he seemed all at once as natural as ever to me. He would not kiss us, doubtless from fear of infecting us with his disease; but mamma said she would do it for him, and then she took us on her knees and gave us, O! kisses upon kisses!

Papa asked for drink and Marguerite wanted to give it to him. Mamma told her she might, and papa laughed when he saw her stirring the tea with a tea-spoon. As she was not tall enough to reach him, she stood on a cushion and held the cup for him. After he drank it he said that Marguerite had made the drink for him better than mamma did,



“ Papa laughed when he saw her stirring the tea with a tea-spoon ” Page 160.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

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and Marguerite believed him ; but I saw that he said it mostly to please her. At the end of ten minutes we were sent out of the room.

After that day papa grew better and better, and we were allowed to stay longer in his room. Marguerite went on errands for him, and told him little stories. Papa used to fall asleep, and that not rarely ; but my sister would keep on with her low murmuring talk — for mamma now, she said ! for herself too, I think.

At last papa was quite well. What joy there was in the house ! The servants seemed to be as happy as we were. M. Hersant, who is always moralizing, said to me, —

“ See, my boy ! good masters are always beloved of their servants.”

And I promised M. Hersant that I would remember it, and be a good master likewise, when I grew up.





CHAPTER XIX.

SEVERAL INTERESTING MATTERS.

CYRIL came to us regularly on holidays. I had missed him a great deal during papa's illness, when we could not have any visitors in the house. But even if he had come I don't think I should have had the heart to play — I was too sad. The house was very different now from what it had been while papa was sick. Officers on horseback were always coming, and papa used to go out to ride with them.

The good lady whom we had met in the Botanical Garden was right to be sad when she embraced us. I can't think of home without papa and mamma. But let it all pass — it is over now. I don't want to make myself sad thinking of it: I am too well contented for that now.

I forgot to tell you that my friend Cyril has surprising talents for drawing. When he was so little that he didn't yet know how to read or write, he used to draw ferocious tigers and lions, and gardens full of trees. Now he draws heads of men with long beards, and such charming landscapes. I told papa about it and he let me have a master to teach

me drawing, and perhaps also to keep me quiet. Papa says that a knowledge of drawing is very useful to soldiers. I was enraptured to have a pencil-case with black pencils, a portfolio, and bread-crumbs to rub out with, which are always necessary.

I wasn't so crazy about learning to draw as was Cyril, but I set myself to it; and when I wanted a little diversion I used to draw Marguerite's portrait. This portrait represented a good old woman with a nose a yard long and a mouth extending from ear to ear, and then I would write under the caricature "*Marguerite's Portrait.*"

You would very much mistake were you to believe that my sister troubled herself about it. She laughed at it even more heartily than I did.

Ah! look you, it is because Marguerite has always been the most amiable of little girls, gay and affable. Now, when she is getting larger, I know it will always please her if I ask her to do anything for me which requires the use of her thimble and her needle.

There are, however, some grave cases in which she has to own her incompetency. For instance, the other day in sliding down the balustrade of the staircase, suddenly something was heard like this: zic! zic! And I had torn the bottom of my — indispensables, as Cyril calls them, before I knew what was going on; they were beyond Marguerite's skill in mending, and Catherine and a scolding had to be my fate.

But there are little and frequent accidents in which Marguerite's needle is very useful to me. She can sew my copy-books together as well as Catherine can ; only I am always afraid she will prick her little fingers, and so I help her to push the needle in and draw it out again.

It is a long time since I have told you anything of Xavier. I have left him alone to grow. You will be pleased to know that he is very good, and looks very droll in his little blouse. When he makes us a bow, as we have taught him to, it amuses us greatly, he does it in such a comical manner. I carry him about and play with him. And now here is a thing that I must tell you about, though it is not flattery to me. No matter, I will be sincere in all I write. My little brother is much more docile than I was at his age. I can't help admiring him, even when I am playing with him. He has his own philosophy already. The other day, sitting on mamma's knees, he was looking at the pictures in the *Royaumont Bible*, as Marguerite and I used to do when we were little. Arrived at the page where Adam and Eve are driven out of paradise, mamma explained to him in what this disobedience had consisted. Xavier put his finger on the picture, became very serious, and said, —

“ Mamma, if they had eaten the apple *at dessert* they wouldn't have been sent out of the beautiful garden — would they ? ”

Xavier is forbidden to eat fruit between meals,

and he gets it only at dessert, and that was what was running in his head when he made this remark. But Master Xavier is not always so severe in his principles, especially when it is a question of lentiles. One day he managed to get away from Catherine — I don't know how. When she found he was gone she went calling and looking for him everywhere, but could not find him. She began to be uneasy. Fortunately she thought of peeping into the pantry. What did she see then but Master Xavier on his knees before the open cupboard, smiling at a plate of lentiles, in which his little hand was trying to act the part of a spoon !

Catherine had some trouble in getting him to leave the temptations of that plate of lentiles ; and she was anxious as to the consequences, not knowing how much he might already have eaten, when she was reassured by hearing him say, —

“ Me not eat any, me not eat any ! ”

I am glad I have a sister ; I am none the less glad that I have a younger brother. I like to be the oldest. He will get big — that little one ! I am seven years older than he. It is a great deal. I will help him learn his lessons ; I will tell him of what I used to do when I was little. We shall love each other a great deal, that is certain ; and if he wants to be a soldier when he gets big, I will take him into my regiment.

Ah ! if it had not been for my Cyril, the winter would have seemed long to me ! It is very well to talk about games in-doors, but I think nothing so

dull as to be shut up in a room to play, without counting on the accidents which are always happening — a lamp overturned, or a window broken — and then the continual desire one has to be meddling with the fire and the tongs, and blowing the bellows! I can't help disobeying in spite of myself, and then I get scolded. I always behave much better in the summer time than during the winter.

When it rained — and I assure you it rained a great deal at Lyons — M. Hersant used to amuse us with plans for future excursions. It was decided that we should go to Sassenage, which is celebrated for its cheese. We were to see its famous grottoes formed in the solid rock. The fairy Mélusine lives in them, although she might have had her choice of many a fine chateau.

Marguerite told us that if she were a fairy she would not be called Mélusine, and that she would live in a grotto of rose-colored crystal, and not in those ugly holes where they make cheese! (Marguerite does not like cheese.) Miss Arabella, hearing so much said in praise of the cheese of Sassenage, began to tell us of that of Chester, which she declared was the best in the world. I find it is always so when the English get to talking of England; everything that they have is the best in the world. M. Hersant, who is partial to Sassenage cheese, came near having a quarrel with our dear Miss on the subject. Marguerite and I could only make out one single thing in the discussion and that was

that there are in the county of Chester thirty-two thousand cows, the milk of which furnishes every year 11,500 tons of cheese, amounting in all to 25,760,000 English pounds. Marguerite doesn't like any kind of cheese but cream cheese. She is fond of that, especially when there are raspberries in it. I am going to tell you why she doesn't like any other sort of cheese.

You know we have a little microscope — a glass which magnifies everything. My sister and I often amuse ourselves by putting little leaves, flies, fragments of moss, or a hair, under our microscope, and they appear very large. One of Marguerite's hairs looks like pack-thread under it.

One day at our *gôûter* we put a morsel of cheese under the glass, and what did we see but a snake? Marguerite screamed out, and has never wanted to eat cheese since. When I am eating cheese I say to tease her, "O sister! the snakes are very nice; don't you want to taste them?" Mamma scolds me a little for it. You have no idea how amusing it is to look at things with a microscope! One sees all the secrets of the little flowers, of the wings of flies, and the sprigs of plants. M. Hersant is right when he says the good God has made many most beautiful things.

I am trying to give you an idea of how we have passed our winters, since Marguerite and I have been able to take part in what is going on. To our other pleasures we add a great deal of playing at *loto*. It is amusing above all, when papa and

mamma join in it. Papa acts the good old man who does not see anything that is going on, and allows himself to be cheated. He gives such comical names to the different numbers: No. 1, he calls the one that is alone; 22, the two cocoa-nuts; 10, the one that isn't 9; 77, legs like Thomas's; and so we laugh a great deal.

We play for *marrons* (large chestnuts) and sugar-plums. Papa maintains that this is the way to make little gluttons of us. But mamma would rather we should be little gluttons than little misers. Mamma detests misers. Ah, it is she that is good — mamma!

Marguerite always says — “I want to be like mamma.”

Marguerite is right. As for me, I have made up my mind to take papa for my model: he would be perfect if he did not always make us go to bed so early. And now I just remember a foolish trick of mine, towards which perhaps you will have some reason for showing yourself indulgent.

In the first place, you must know that M. Hersant is always a long time tying his cravat. It really seems sometimes as if he would never get done with it. One day we were to go and see a review, and M. Hersant went to put on a fresh cravat. I was impatient, and finding myself alone in the *salon* I had the bright idea of setting the clock forward. I got up on a stool, I opened the glass door, and I pushed the hands forward; but O! despair! that old clock could do nothing better than to begin to

strike all at once, and louder than ever! I was frightened and very uneasy.

After breakfast mamma said, looking at the clock, "How late it is!"

"Not at all, my dear," said papa, taking out his repeater. "It is the clock which is three quarters of an hour too fast."

"Impossible, Georges!" said my mother, decisively.

I got very red.

Papa said, "Doubtless Pierre has been meddling with it."

"No, papa, it was I," I cried at this.

"And why, sir?"

"To make M. Hersant get ready quicker."

Some one rang the bell just then, and papa pretended to have to go out all at once; but he was laughing.

Mamma didn't laugh at all. She forbade me to meddle with the clocks on any pretext whatsoever. She added: —

"I forgive you this time, my child, because you have told the truth; but for that, you should not be allowed to go to the review."

I will always tell the truth!

One of my greatest pleasures was to see my own old clothes which I had outgrown given away to some poor little boy. This is how it used to be done: we used to choose the son of some poor but good workman. Catherine would wash and clean him all over, and mamma herself then

arranged his hair. Then he was dressed in my clothes and a nice lunch given him ; and mamma would tell him before he went away that he must be careful to keep himself clean, else the clothes would be given to some other little boy the following year.

One day the rain poured down as if it never would stop. We didn't know what to do to amuse ourselves. Papa was out. I went into his dressing-room ; his things were just as he had left them after shaving. I took the shaving-cup and lathered my face all over until nothing but my eyes could be seen. Marguerite wasn't long in coming to look for me. After having laughed heartily at my besmeared visage, she said to me :—

“Brother, I saw at the fair a monkey who was shaving a wooden head. Please let me show you. I won't cut you. My little knife will do for a razor.”

You must agree, dear reader, that this was a charming idea. So I at once accepted my sister's offer of service. My dear Marguerite having obtained my consent, put a towel under my chin, and pretending that the lather wasn't thick enough, she took hold of my head. I had my nose full of soap, and I was obliged to shut my eyes and mouth and abandon myself to the mercy of my little sister.

At last, when she had finished lathering me, she took her little knife, with its handle inlaid with roses and myosotis, and began to shave me. I needn't tell you that she judged it to be proper and useful to pinch my nose several times, and to put



"She took hold of my head." Page 172.

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R L

more soap on the spots where my beard resisted her knife. Catherine came in just as she was finishing the operation, and we ran away laughing.

Mamma hearing of the affair, forbade me to go into papa's dressing-room. I found this a little inconvenient, as I had been in the habit of going in there to look at myself in the glass — to give my hair a finishing touch with the brush, and to put a little cologne-water on my pocket-handkerchief.

It is astonishing how the time passes, even when one has to write themes.

Once more the winter had passed away, and mamma was beginning to talk of the country. The country! how beautiful it is! one has so much room to play in, and so many more ways of amusing one's self. And although mamma always dresses us very simply, we are still more simply dressed in the country. One can go out just as one is; one takes his cane — that's all!

We counted the days, and that day — the day of our departure — which seemed so far off, came quickly enough. The carriage was covered with parcels and boxes. Mamma and papa seemed as well satisfied as we were, and so everybody was happy, except poor Cyril, whose heart seemed to swell up in a big lump into his throat as he bade me good-by in English.

But you haven't the least idea of what was going to happen.



CHAPTER XX.

WHICH WILL CAUSE REGRET.

WE arrived, and we began to run about everywhere, calling out, "How do you do, Master Peter?" "How do you do, Francis?" "How do you do, Martha?" and "How do you do?" to everybody we met.

Doubtless we children are much beloved by our country people, but mamma's return is always a feast-day for them. They always know as soon as she comes. They have only to ask for her if they want to see her. But they pretend to come on business connected with the estate, although they want to see her about their own affairs. Mamma understands all this and lends herself to it. Those who are sick come to see her as soon as they can walk, otherwise my dear little mother goes in her turn to see them. Sometimes she takes us with her; and a visit from us always gives pleasure.

The morning of the day after our return to the country, Catherine on coming into my room gave an exclamation of astonishment. I was all red. I had the measles.

As I did not feel any pain, the alarm of my nurse seemed singular to me. I asked her for the glass, and laughed heartily at seeing how ugly I looked.

My gayety did not last long. Mamma came and said that I must not get up. M. Hersant joined his voice to that of mamma and Catherine, and that wasn't all! — our doctor came before long. I like him much, because he used to lend me his cane to ride on when I was little, and pretend to take a pinch of snuff out of my hand, just as if it had been a snuff-box — and then, too, I had never been very sick. Therefore I wasn't much frightened at first on seeing the good M. Nicolle; but when he told me that I must not think of getting up, that I must keep my arms under the bedclothes, and not uncover myself, I thought I was half dead all at once, and I turned my back to him that I might cry.

"Come, now, my little friend," said the doctor, "can't, you be good, like your sister?"

"Has Marguerite got the measles?" I asked.

"Yes; and as this room is large I will have your sister's bed put in the recess here; and although at some distance apart, you can converse a little, and that will make it less tedious for you."

"O, sir, that will be very amusing. I don't care any more if I have got the measles!"

While our good doctor was talking to me, papa entered carrying Marguerite in his arms. She was so well wrapped up in the bedclothes, that only the tip of her nose peeped out. The idea of our both

being ill at the same time tickled me. Mamma and Catherine were less delighted, but they were very good. When Marguerite caught sight of me she laughed, and I laughed too.

The first hour of our installation in the same room was very joyful, but the second, and those that followed, were much less so.

It is a sad thing to have one's breakfast and dinner forbidden, and to have them replaced by hot tea. I should probably have been impatient if I had been sick by myself, but my sister's example made me ashamed to show less self-control. I confess frankly that my sister is more reasonable than I am, but I don't like to have the proofs of it forced upon me too often. For the rest, if I am to believe Catherine, little boys are never so patient as their sisters, when they are sick. My nurse tried to sustain my courage by a great many fine stories, which I will spare you. It will be sufficient to know that the glorious examples which she cited kindled my enthusiasm to such a degree that I resolved not to complain; but I did not keep my promise.

Catherine does not like to have us look at ourselves in the glass. She consented, however, now that we were sick, to let us have that consolation from time to time. I suppose she thought we could not possibly have any vain feelings on seeing our red and swollen noses!

One day Marguerite said to me, "Brother, just suppose we were to stay ugly like this."

But I said, resolutely, "O, no! we shall not."

"I am afraid it may turn out so," said she, doubtfully.

"O well! what difference will it make?" said I, resolved not to show any unmanly regrets. "Everybody would love us all the same."

"But for all that, Henri, I should be very sorry not to look like mamma when I get big," she insisted.

"But," said I, to console her, "you will be like her inside if you are not like her outside. You will be like her if you are good. And then you will sing and play the piano as she does, and people will not think of your face. O, never mind! you will be very happy after all!"

She responded, indignantly: "Why, Riri! is it possible that you would not be sorry if I had to remain so ugly? Very well, indeed, sir! But I promise you I should be very sorry if it were you in my place. And so you don't want any more to be a handsome officer like papa?"

For all answer I began to sing, —

"I don't care for being ugly!
I don't care! I don't care!
I don't care for being —
Ugly! ugly! ugly!"

varying the tones for the sake of effect.

Mamma came in, and I told her what my sister had been saying. She said: —

"This redness will pass away, my children; there is nothing for you to be troubled about. But you

know you would not be less dear to me if your skins were not so white and fine."

I believe it. Nevertheless I have often seen mamma smile with pleasure when looking at my sister, as much as to say: "What a pretty little girl she is! How well her black curls look under her straw hat! How graceful she is!"

But then Marguerite is good as well as pretty, and I am sure that mamma loves goodness more than beauty; and I am like her in that. But I didn't say all this to mamma.

The reader will be so glad to know that we had the measles very *mildly*, to use our doctor's words. We had hardly any fever, but we had to take a great deal of syrup and other stuff, nevertheless. We were allowed to get up at the end of eight days, but were forbidden to put our noses out of the window. We were prisoners, and Catherine was a wicked jailer. We used to pass whole hours at the window, looking through the glass at what was going on outside. The gardener's little daughter came and danced under the window to amuse us. She drove the chickens over to that side of the house, and then threw them the grain where we could see them eat. Our lamb came also, to graze beneath our eyes. But all this only increased our desire to go out and to gather flowers.

One day the sun was shining brighter than his wont. The sky was blue, and we heard the birds singing outside. My sister was more dispirited than usual. "I never want to have a bird again," she said to me, with a sigh.



"The gardener's little daughter came and danced under the window."
Page 180.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

"Why, don't you love the birds any more?" I asked.

"I don't say that, Henri. But I never want to have one in a cage again; I think it would make him too unhappy," she replied.

"And you are like a bird in a cage? Is that what you are thinking of?" I said.

"Yes," she said; "and it is not at all amusing to be caged up."

"Would you like me to tell you a story?" I asked.

"O! but you don't know any," she answered, listlessly.

"I will make up one."

"But you don't know how to make up one," she persisted.

Mamma entered, and seeing that my sister looked sad, she called her "my poor little darling," and told her that we should go out soon, and that we must thank God who had kept us from being very sick, and that to feel a little dull was no such great trouble, — above all when we had a mamma always ready to tell us stories.

My sister forgot all her listlessness. She jumped up on mamma's knee. I was about to build a fort and conduct an attack upon it with my foot-soldiers, but I was obliged to sit down like a little girl to listen to the story. I did so in a slightly petulant manner; though why, I'm sure I don't know, for I was well enough satisfied to listen to mamma.



CHAPTER XXI.

SUPERBE AND GENTILLET.

THERE was once a queen who had lost her husband, and found herself much perplexed in the bringing up of her two sons.

Superbe, the oldest, was so difficult to manage that all the masters and governesses to whom he was in turn confided, resigned charge of him at the end of twenty-four hours. But at last a generous man was found, who was touched by the grief of the mother.

The king had willed that his heir should be, from his earliest age, dressed in habits embroidered with gold and silver. You will conceive what a stupid vanity was engendered in the prince by these fine clothes.

People were surprised that a foolish caprice like this should originate with the father instead of with the mother; for in that country, the intellect of men was supposed to be superior to that of women, although many things that happened proved the contrary.

Superbe was tall and handsome. His elegant figure set off to advantage the rich vestments which he always wore, even inside of the palace. But all this show could not hide the fact that he was a frivolous child, inquisitive and willful, and lazy to such an extent that he was ignorant of even those things which ordinarily all children of his age know. He thought of nothing but play.

Gentillet, younger by two years, was regarded as having no importance of his own, as he was not to have any part in the kingdom of his father. But he, understanding nothing of all this, was the happiest of little boys when, after he had fulfilled all his duties, his mother kissed him and gave him his recompense. Everybody loved Gentillet. If he was not as handsome as Superbe, still his amiable manner, the gayety and frankness of his mien, made you forget what he lacked in beauty of face and figure. People said: "What a pity that he is not the oldest! for he gives sure promise of becoming good and wise. What will become of the kingdom in the hands of such a scatter-brain as Superbe?"

The queen greatly loved both her sons; but you will perhaps be surprised to hear that she preferred Superbe, and precisely on account of his having the most faults. Her love was a sort of tender compassion for him.

"What will become of him?" thought this good mother. "Nobody will love him. I, I love him because he is my son. As for Gentillet, poor chevalier

though he is, he will be happy because he will be beloved. He is good and amiable, studious and resolute."

The queen, being in deep mourning, received no strangers. Her ladies of honor, with whom she was most intimate, and the tutors of her children, alone had access to her solitude. These last came oftenest to complain of Superbe, and to ask that they might be replaced by other tutors. But when the queen began to speak, her sweet voice and gentle look conquered their resolves, and they would return to their posts after giving renewed assurances of their devotion.

One day, when the queen was still excited by the description of a scene to which she had just listened, in which Superbe figured in no favorable light, and while she was still asking herself what were the means to be taken to reform his character, some one knocked at the door. This was a liberty which was strictly forbidden to all. However the queen had a mind, out of curiosity, to open the door. And on her invitation there walked in a little peasant woman, fresh and gracious, habited in a kirtle of blue cloth, with a black corsage, a straw hat wreathed with red field poppies, and her distaff in her hand, who smiled at her on entering, and said: —

"Good queen, I am the fairy Flower-of-the-Fields. I love you, and I have come to console you.

"You, I suppose, like all the rest, only believe in

fairies covered with gold and diamonds. You think fairies must always be hideous, or else dazzling with beauty ; a simple shepherdess does not appear to you worthy of the name ; but you are wrong.

“ I have had the choice of magic gifts, and I have chosen the quiet and the humility of a rustic life. I have no chariot drawn by dragons with flaming jaws ; my presence is never announced by the noise of the thunder or the flash of the lightning.

“ As my name tells you, I live in the fields, where the weather is always fine — at least it is so where I am, for I don't push the severity of my simplicity so far as to receive the hail and the rain upon my back.

“ My power consists in succoring the poor ; and in sometimes obliging princes and queens. I say *sometimes*, for if I should occupy myself with all those who suffer, who struggle, or who lament the perfidy of their best friends, I should pass my life altogether far away from the happy fields. There my hands help in the task of the child sent out by its mother to glean ; I lighten the old man's burden. When I see industrious farmers in want of help to gather in the harvest, I aid them by enchantment.

“ If I pass where the freshly-washed clothes have been spread out by some hard-working housewife to dry, and if the weather is uncertain, I blow upon them and make them dry more quickly, that she may gather them in before rain comes. I enter the cottage ; I comfort the children whom I find

there left to cry alone by the mother, who is obliged to go out to her daily work. I give broth to the babies ; I fondle them ; I sing to them sweet songs, which they have never heard before. I wash the faces of the older children, and teach them pretty plays.

“ And that isn't all ; I go to the farm-house, and when I see a worthy servant overborne with work, I knead the bread with invisible hands, so that the labor is soon over. I watch the baking, too, so that it is done rapidly and well. Then I help make the butter. I watch over the flocks. I make the roses and the jessamines blossom the night before some great holiday, that the young girls may have flowers to deck themselves with. In short, I am a practical fairy — a happy fairy, believe me, since every moment of the day I am doing something to make others happy, without exacting gratitude from them in return — wise precaution ! But for all my rustic tastes, my good queen, I am not the less a philosophical fairy. I have my own ideas upon education and my own methods, which I have come to propose that you should try upon your oldest son. He wants to play — and to play always. Very well ! We will amuse him, and at the same time cure him !

“ But it is time for you to have your supper. Let me serve you after my own fashion.”

Flower-of-the-Fields clapped her hands, and instantly there appeared two little shepherds, carrying a table covered with good things. Among these

were some dainty cream cheeses, served in white cloths so delicate and fine that the cheese seemed to be contained in crystal vases. The table-cloth was embroidered, and Flower-of-the-Fields drew the queen's attention to the design of the embroidery.

"I didn't do it by a stroke of my wand," she said, archly. "It is really and truly the work of my fingers; only, you understand, I work as a fairy works. I would rather renounce my power than live in idleness. I detest lazy people; for them I never do anything."

"O! what a good idea of yours it was to come and see me, my dear Flower-of-the-Fields," said the queen, who was eating a splendid apricot with a hearty relish. "You know that trouble finds its way even into palaces."

"O yes, I know. But those who live in palaces are not always willing to listen to reason. Come, now! is it a bargain? You will let me have Superbe, and I will bring him back to you reformed, and that by the gentlest of measures."

"You ask a great sacrifice of me," said the queen. "What will be said of the absence of the crown-prince?"

"Merely that he has gone upon a foreign tour. Is not that the grand resource of princes and lords? For the rest, good queen, you shall not lose sight of your son. See, here is a little wooden tube which is worth all the opera-glasses in the world. Superbe shall live in a chateau a thousand miles from here, in a country which is enchanted and which is also

enchancing. Whenever you want to see and hear him you have only to look through this tube. But first look through it at the chateau, and tell me if it pleases you."

The queen put the tube to her eye, and saw an immense palace of blue and white marble. The windows were decked with garlands of flowers; the trees were covered with fruits; birds of all colors fluttered about in the air; ravishing music was heard; bands of children were running about in the gardens, which were of a beauty hitherto unknown to her.

"How do you like my little country house?" said the fairy.

"Admirable! only the great distance frightens me."

Flower-of-the-Fields burst into a laugh.

"The great distance? My good queen, do you think that I travel by rail or in a balloon like a tortoise? As soon as your son shall have gotten into my little carriage, a good east wind will carry it away as lightly as if it were a straw."

The queen thought it was her duty to accept the fairy's offer of service. The agreement was made. It was now late.

"I will leave you," said Flower-of-the-Fields. "Now, rest yourself; I am going to take up the distaff of a good old woman who has fallen asleep over her work, and if I don't go to her aid she won't have her thread ready to sell in the market to-morrow. Good-by, dear queen; when you awake again, your son will be in my chateau."

She disappeared, leaving upon the table a bouquet of a delicious freshness and perfume. The queen passed an excellent night; but hardly had she awakened the next morning when she took up her magic glass. She saw through it the enchanted palace, in which there seemed to be a great excitement about something. While she looked, O surprise! Flower-of-the-Fields and Superbe arrived. They were received by a crowd of joyous children, who invited Superbe to play with them.

From this time forward the queen was almost always looking through her glass. Her ladies of honor and her tiring-women did not know what to think, on seeing a grave person like her majesty pass all her time in looking through a wooden tube. When she was so tired that she could not any longer hold it up herself, one of her women had to hold it for her, so that she could look through it.

All the audiences were suspended; even the ambassadors were not admitted to see the queen; Gentillet could hardly get permission to kiss his mother. No one knew what to think at court. As for Superbe, everybody thought that he had departed with a numerous suite, which the queen had taken the precaution of sending away to a foreign country.

Let us leave the tender mother as she strains her eyes in looking through her magic glass, while we relate what was passing in the blue chateau.

The little boys who had received Superbe led him, singing and dancing as they did so, into the

palace, then into the garden, and played all sorts of games to win his admiration. They showed him wooden horses that could gallop, harlequins, and clowns, and rope-dancers, golden hoops light as feathers, enchanted tops, cups-and-balls of diamonds, birds that would let you throw salt on their tails, and which you could put into beautiful cages, where they would sing without requiring either to drink or to eat.

Not a book! Not a pen! Not even the shadow of a teacher!

The soul of Superbe was filled with joy. He didn't want ever to go away, and asked how long he might lead such a pleasant life as this.

All his caprices were satisfied, and certainly he had enough of them! One day he took a notion to see if he should be more fortunate than a great many other little boys of his own age have been. He asked for the moon. An astronomer brought it to him at once, and carried it back again with the same facility. The spirit of gluttony was not less attentively deferred to than that of caprice. There were walls of barley-sugar, curtains of spun sugar, chairs of Angelica (a sort of candied comfit), buffets of chocolate, tables made of candied almonds, ornaments in sugared fruits, comfits, etc. The great wonder was, that one might pass the tongue over all these nice things and nibble at them, and they would look as if they had not been touched at all. Superbe regretted very little his own country, where the houses were built of hewn stone, the tables

made of wood, and the chairs covered with velvet. Nor did this selfish boy think any more of his mother and of Gentillet. The time passed all too quickly for him, while on the other hand the queen saw with pain the months succeed each other, and still Flower-of-the-Fields did not bring her back her son.

At last the young prince began to be tired. He would have liked to give up playing for a while, and be left to himself; but he was not allowed this liberty. "Let us play! Let us still play!" said his companions. But at last he was so tired he could play no longer, and the queen was not less tired of pointing her glass at the blue chateau. She began to ask herself if Flower-of-the-Fields were not deceiving her. Happily, the bouquet which she had left was still there, always fresh and fragrant, to justify her faith in the fairy.

And what was Gentillet doing? He was learning rapidly all that was assigned him. His masters discovered every day some new talent or inclination in him for the sciences, the arts, and philosophy. He was so accomplished that the great men of the realm agreed to ask the queen to give him the government of the kingdom in the absence of his brother.

The queen was afflicted by the idea of such an arrangement. Superbe was the oldest, and the crown was his by right. She looked once more through her magic glass towards the blue chateau, and saw Superbe chasing the golden butterflies

about in the air. She sighed, and complied with the wishes of her people.

Gentillet was greatly surprised on hearing of the honor that had been done him ; he had believed that he was but accomplishing a simple duty in showing himself studious. He asked if it would not be better to recall his older brother, to whom the crown rightfully belonged. He spoke with so much wisdom and unselfishness, that the lords of the realm persisted that he should at once assume the reins of government.

Gentillet completely justified the choice of those who had elected him. His thoughtfulness found means for reforming all abuses. He judged uprightly, and decreed that judgment should be justly given. The poor were allowed to approach him ; he heard them, and plead their cause.

One morning the queen went out alone into the meadows. The crops had been harvested, and the fields were covered with rich sheaves. Her majesty sat down upon a sheaf of wheat, and thinking of Superbe, whom she had, through her glass, just seen carried away through the air in a balloon on some pleasure excursion, she asked herself when this strange trial of her patience and maternal affection would have an end.

“ Courage ! ” said a gentle voice near her ; “ and we shall soon reap our harvest. Patience for a few hours more, and Superbe will be entirely disgusted with the plays which have occupied his entire attention for the past two years. Good queen,” added

Flower-of-the-Fields, at that moment showing herself in her shepherdess dress, "you have need of all your patience for a short time yet."

"It will not fail me," responded the queen. "What mother would falter when the happiness of her child is at stake? But what are you doing here this morning, Flower-of-the-Fields?"

"I am gleaning. It isn't enough for me that I protect the harvest of the industrious farmer; my joy would be incomplete if I could not assure to the poor gleaners their small share in it."

"See!" she said, opening her apron; and then perceiving a flock of birds, she threw them some of the grain, and they came fluttering about her and perched upon her head and shoulders, and sang altogether and in perfect concord. The queen had never heard anything so ravishing at the court concerts.

"Your majesty will see something new the first time you look again through your glass," said Flower-of-the-Fields.

The queen went in at once and ran to her glass!

Superbe was crying alone in a corner. His companions had deserted him; but their joyous cries were still heard in the distance, and it seemed as if the prince might easily find them. Was it because he did not want to play? The queen wept, too, at this thought; but these tears did not hurt her eyes like those which she had shed in the past. It was the change in the expression of Superbe's face which moved her. His habitual air of care-

less arrogance was replaced by a look of gentle thoughtfulness. He got up and went out of the chateau, notwithstanding the cries of his companions, who were still heard calling him, and went into the park. He walked some time, and then sat down under a flowering acacia. A shepherdess came up to him. It was Flower-of-the-Fields in disguise.

“What can be done to give you pleasure?” said she, making him a courtesy.

“Ah! gentle shepherdess, perhaps you will leave me as my companions have done, if I tell you what I wish.”

“Say on — who knows?”

“I want to see my mother, my brother, my teachers; I want my books, my copy-books, my geography. O my geography! this is what I need to make me happy.”

Superbe had hardly finished speaking when the blue chateau crumbled down with an awful noise. A young groom appeared leading a snow white horse, all caparisoned with blue velvet embroidered with gold, and told him to mount and he would be carried at once to his mother. Superbe obeyed without asking the why and wherefore, according to his usual reckless habits; and he found himself in the twinkling of an eye in the court of his own palace.

The queen had seen and heard all. She went down to receive her son, and embraced him tenderly. As for Superbe, he did not cease to exclaim, “My



"And they came fluttering about her." Page 191.

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mother! My good mother! O how happy I am to find you again!"

The mother forgot all her past pain on hearing those sweet words.

Superbe had grown taller, but his face had not the fresh and joyful look of a diligent and happy scholar. He asked for his brother. The queen told him, with a little embarrassment of what had happened in his absence. Superbe did not show any discontentment. He asked for his teachers, and made known to them the resolution he had taken to study diligently and make up for lost time.

Gentillet was full of joy on seeing his brother again. He told him that he was ready to vacate the throne in his favor. Superbe declared that he was incapable of governing, and begged his brother to keep the crown which so well became him. In spite of his modesty Gentillet was perplexed for an answer! For he could not forget that his brother had passed in play those years which he had consecrated to study.

Meanwhile, Superbe set himself to work. It was pitiful to see such a great boy learning to read, making pot-hooks, and o's and a's, and reciting fables, while his brother conducted the affairs of the realm with a wisdom which astonished white-headed old men.

The queen awaited with impatience the visit of Flower-of-the-Fields. She came soon.

"What do you think now of my method, my dear queen?"

“Excellent! My son is entirely reformed. He has learned for himself how much children are mistaken in believing that happiness consists in having nothing to do but to amuse themselves; he understands the wisdom of those parents who partition their children’s time equally into work-hours and play-hours. But my dear good fairy, can’t you, by a stroke of your wand, do away with the difficulties which that dear child finds to-day even in the most elementary studies?”

“My power does not go so far,” said Flower-of-the-Fields. “Courage and perseverance alone can make up for the time lost. But your tears touch me, dear queen, and I am going to give Superbe a feather of good-will, out of which he can make a pen. This pen will be of the greatest help to him so long as he is resolute to work. But it will lose its virtues when his good resolutions fail him.”

The queen found this condition a fair one, for she did not doubt her son’s courage — she even succeeded (which was an astonishing thing for so fond a mother) in persuading herself that Flower-of-the-Fields was right, saying softly to herself, that it is true that parents should never in the least compromise with that ugly sin of laziness, which makes the unhappiness of their children.

“My darlings,” continued mamma, “Superbe’s pen did very well. It never gave out but once, and then it was only to gain new swiftness. It was never necessary to mend it; and one drop of ink

lasted it a whole year, so that Superbe did not lose one moment of time. He never became as wise as his brother, but he succeeded in gaining a good education, and in causing his past misconduct to be so far forgotten that he was called The Good Prince."

[Mamma with her own hand wrote this story out for me, to put into my memoirs. — *Note by the Author.*]





CHAPTER XXII.

OUR HAPPINESS ON GETTING WELL AGAIN. — THE BEES.

THIS story gave me great pain. I thought mamma had invented it expressly to put me in mind of how lazy I had been in the past. I was going away to cry, when M. Hersant brought us from our farmer a splendid honey-comb full of honey. This waxen cake excited our admiration. We knew very well that the bees made honey, but we had never seen them at work. O ! how tiresome it was to be shut up when we wanted to go and see the bees ! M. Hersant quickly consoled us by promising to take us soon to farmer Claude's to see a bee-hive.

I didn't think that mamma had suspected the pain that the story of Superbe and Gentillet had caused me. Imagine then my surprise, when she said to me that same evening, as she gave me my good-night kiss, —

“ You must not believe, my dear child, that I invented that story that I told you to-day to remind you of a past fault which you have long since bravely

corrected. Indeed, no ; I don't know why I happened to fix on that particular story. You have been so industrious for a long time, my dear little one, that I never think of the past now. Henri, mothers love their children better than they do themselves, and when they once pardon, it is forever. Still, my darling, the sensitiveness which you have evinced proves to me how sorry you are for having ever caused us pain. Do you understand ? The *conscience* never forgets, and God has ordered it so for our greatest good. So now, Gentillet," said mamma playfully, kissing me again, "go to sleep, and sleep well. And if the weather is as fine to-morrow as it has been to day, we shall let our two little birds go free."

I was so rejoiced that it was at least two minutes before I could get to sleep.

The next day the sky was blue, and the sun seemed to be as well contented as we were. Catherine dressed us with more than usual care ; but if mamma had listened to her never-ending forebodings, we should have been still left in the cage !

The door was opened, and we were upon the terrace. What happiness it was to be out at last !

After gamboling around a little, we went to visit our intimate friends, the chickens, and our lamb. I can assure you that our friends were not at all indifferent to our return. The hens cackled, and we thanked them for the good eggs they had given us while we were sick. Our sheep rubbed his head against us and looked tenderly at the landscape ! I am not joking — it is the truth !

Marguerite trotted about like a little partridge. There was nothing said about lessons for fifteen days. We walked out or played, and the rest of the time we stayed with mamma. She watched us, touched our hands and our foreheads, and asked us if we felt just as well as usual.

One day, M. Hersant seeing us eating slices of bread and honey, asked permission of mamma to take us to see the bee-hives at farmer Claude's. We anticipated mamma's reply by our joyous exclamations, and were soon on the way.

Marguerite asked me suddenly, "But what if the bees should sting us?"

"They only sting those who are afraid," answered M. Hersant. "Be quiet, Marguerite, and don't make any gestures, and you will see them pass near you without troubling themselves about your presence. If by chance one of them should light upon you, don't stir, and you will soon see it fly away."

"Don't you remember, Marguerite," I said, "one day at my aunt's we were walking in the Linden-tree Avenue, and thousands of bees were humming at their work in the trees overhead?"

"O!" cried Marguerite, interrupting me; "I see the hives! I see farmer Claude! Let us walk on quickly."

Claude took us to a corner of the garden, and we saw on two long wooden benches exposed fully to the south, several inverted baskets, rounded at the tops, and made out of ropes of straw, twisted and

strongly bound together. These are what they call the hives.

Our farmer is very proud of his bees, and he did not want to be begged to do the honors of the place for us. Seeing how interested Marguerite and myself were, he took us in front of a kind of wooden box — a hive of which the interior could be seen. This hive was made with two shutters well jointed, and fastened by two hooks. Claude opened a shutter, and we saw the bees at work under a glass. Marguerite, who no longer had any fears on account of her little nose, was on tiptoe with joy and expectation. She couldn't take her eyes off of the honey-combs suspended from the top of the hive. I was not less astonished and delighted than was my sister.

I asked how the honey-combs could be taken out.

Said M. Hersant, "The moment is chosen when the greater part of the bees are away in the fields seeking honey. One side of the hive is struck noisily, to make those who have stayed at home go out at the other side. The roof is taken off, the hooks taken out, and the honey-combs are separated, and then in place of the full half of the hive, another compartment, exactly like it but empty, is fitted on to the remaining compartment. The bees ask nothing better than to fill it with honey."

I am sure M. Hersant would have told us much more about it, but just then mamma made him a sign that it was time to go.

On the way home I asked M. Hersant if he would not tell me more about the bees. He promised me that he would, for he was much pleased with the interest I took in the matter ; and the next day he explained to me again all that we had seen, and told me about the queen of the bees, of her importance, and the system upon which the bees arrange their every-day life. But I have forgotten all about it, and I should spoil my memoirs if I tried to play the *savant*. One thing which he told me of, however, I have not forgotten. It was about a good blind man, M. Huber, who has studied the ways and habits of bees to better advantage than any person else, and who has written books about them. M. Hersant has the books in his library. This M. Huber had a *sérvant* who used to watch the bees all day under a glass, and tell his master of all they did. I think this must have been some amusement for the poor blind man, and I am glad of it. I mean to learn all about the bees too, when I get older. And while I am waiting I eat plenty of honey on my bread.

Although I was now quite well, I was not yet allowed to race about in my usual wild way. However, I always managed to be a little in advance of the others, when we went to walk. Our walks were lessons to us, but lessons without books ; no dictionaries and no grammars were necessary. Papa and M. Hersant took turns to tell us about what we saw. My curiosity scarcely let them have a moment's rest. The gentle Marguerite also had her

little questions to ask, and mamma was well contented with us.

One day when we were in the forest, I cried out all at once, "O! an ant-hill!" and I was about to thrust my cane unceremoniously into the house of my lady-ants, when M. Hersant seized my arm as if it had been some great crime that I was about to commit.

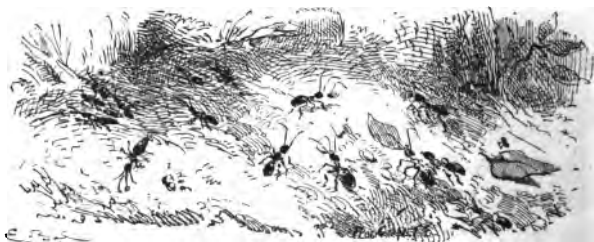
"What are you thinking of, Henri? The ants merit your admiration as much as the bees."

"O, sir! the ant is a selfish creature; it neither gives nor lends. Now, I like generosity."

"O Henri!" cried my sister, "don't tease them! See how hard at work they are. I should like to know how an ant's house is built, but I should have to be an ant to do that."

"O, that is not necessary," said papa. "Ants are such interesting insects that their manners have been the study of many wise men, who have written books about them."

And then what do you think? Papa and M. Hersant began to tell us such extraordinary things about the ants, that I have retained them in my mind as easily as I retained the story of Gentillet. Seriously, perhaps all that I heard was not true; but that is no matter. I am going to tell you what was said while we stood around the ant-hill. If I make any mistakes I hope you will overlook them, as it is at least a year since I heard what I am going to tell you.



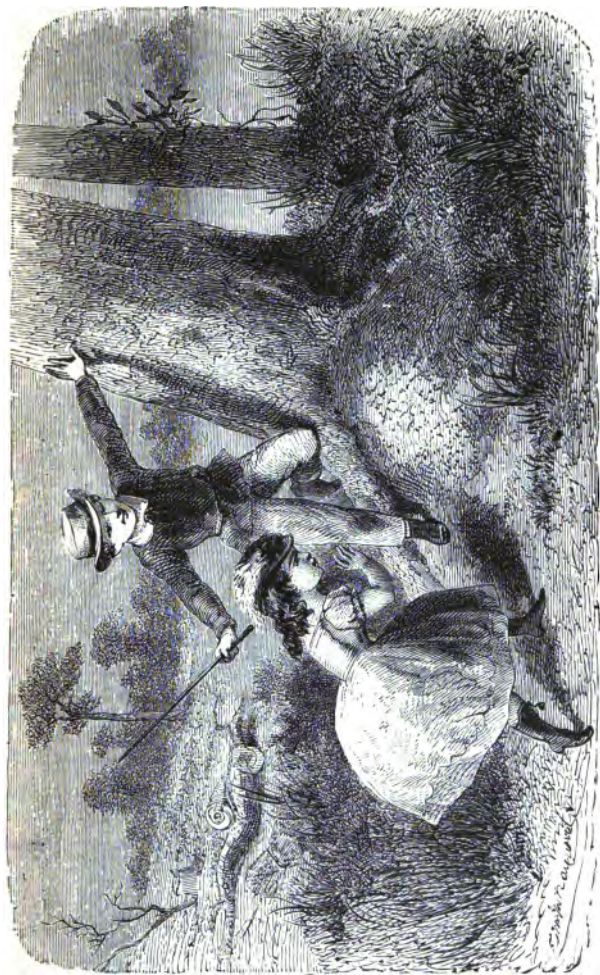
CHAPTER XXIII.

WHERE THE AUTHOR IS OBLIGED TO PRETEND TO
SOME SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE. — THE ANTS.

I KNOW a great deal more about ants than I do about bees. You meet ants everywhere, and there is no danger in looking at them.

It is not the same with bees, who place a high valuation on themselves ; and notwithstanding what M. Hersant says, mamma is always afraid that we shall get stung. I love all dumb creatures, and if I were not obliged to give my time to my studies, I would spend it in watching them, especially in the country, where there are so many of them.

The ant-hill which I found in the forest belonged to some yellow ants. Ants are not all alike. You, my little friend, have, I suppose, also found ant-hills in your path at different times, when you have been spending your vacations in the country. And these hillocks, perhaps, have surprised you. But do you know that the ants carry from one place to another, little bits of the bark of trees, leaves, stems of herbs, tiny pebbles, grain, hay, anything that they find



"The ant-hill belonged to some yellow ants." Page 208.

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and are able to carry, and which will serve to build up their houses as high as possible ?

Marguerite thought that the ants carried all these things on their backs. We laughed heartily at my sister's idea.

These skillful workers have very strong jaws and antennæ, hooked at the ends, and notched their whole length. These serve them for carrying their materials about, and also for attacks upon their enemies.

I had supposed that the ants worked so hard and laid up so much that they might be duly provided for during the winter. You remember the ant in the fable said to the grasshopper who came to ask for something to eat, —

“What did you do all the summer ?”

“Night and day I sang to all comers. I hope you are not displeased at this.”

“Not at all.”

“I am delighted to hear it.”

“And as you sang then, you can dance now.”

But it is not as I supposed. Ants eat very little, and they eat no grain. Their idea in building a hillock is to protect themselves from rain and cold, and to keep out the curious from their abodes. These lady-ants are also very much afraid of the sun, though they like to keep warm. They are like ourselves when we close up our Venetian blinds, though we are all well satisfied to know that the weather is fine and bright outside.

Marguerite and I were already much astonished

at all that we saw and heard, when M. Hersant put the finishing touch to our wonder, by telling us about the inside of the ant-hill.

To begin with, we must remember that M. Hersant never exaggerates. He is a calm and dispassionate man. So you must believe as much of what he said as I shall now repeat for you.

The greater part of the ant-house is not seen. It is hidden in the earth. There are avenues leading from the top of the hill into the interior, and there are little streets in which the ants are always passing to and fro. They are not stupid creatures, for when night comes they shut up and barricade their doors just as people do, and they open them in the morning. If it rains they stay inside and work. They don't pass their time looking out of the windows. They have a perfect understanding amongst themselves. At the least danger those who are on duty divide themselves into two parties. One of these goes out to reconnoitre and attack the enemy if it be advisable; the others go to arouse those inside. They all come out bristling, warlike, and furious. But I am wrong in saying all — for the *nurses* stay inside to take care of the little ones, and they hide them in holes.

When we went back to the house, papa told us many more wonderful things about the grass-ants. This kind build little houses, one above the other, along the blades of grass and herbs with little grains of sand. Others make their nests at the roots of trees and go up into the highest branches to look

for the plant-louse, an insect which furnishes them with a kind of syrup which is greatly to their taste. They are careful not to kill them — they only suck the juice out of their bodies.

Here Marguerite cried out, "An ant! an ant!" I put it under my microscope. How queer his large legs looked, and his great head, and his fawn-colored corselet, brown claws, and wide open mouth, thus magnified. We understood, now, what service these rugged feelers of his rendered him in war as well as in household affairs. These insignificant ants, whom I can so easily crush, are courageous warriors, and at certain times a whole nation takes up arms. All of them, even the young ones, throw themselves upon the enemy to drag him into the ant-hill, where he has a bad time of it. It is not only small insects who have to fear their attacks, for they are not afraid even of beetles. Their weapons are those feelers of which I spoke before. When they think the neighborhood in which they are is dangerous they move away. As soon as they get to the spot which they have chosen for their new home, they go at once to work with an astonishing ardor. On a journey, the big ants carry the little ones — that is good of them! These little creatures are very spirited. M. Hersant has seen them drink.

Marguerite has just come in. She came and read over my shoulder what I had written (with my permission). She says:—

"Henri, don't forget about the ants who carve

wood into different shapes. O! brother, how interesting your memoirs are getting to be!"

And then my dear sister pulled me mischievously but gently by the hair, and ran away.

I certainly was going to forget about the ants who carve in wood, and when I thought about it I didn't find myself any further advanced. I didn't remember very well what had been said about them; and so that evening, as if it were by the merest accident (I am cunning, you know), I turned the conversation once more upon them, and here is what I learned. These ants choose a tree suited to their purpose, and carve the whole interior into fanciful shapes. They divide the trunk of the tree into several divisions or compartments, with floors and ceilings all about as thick as a playing card. The floors are sustained by walls or columns. These ant-houses are very large. They have vestibules, halls, boudoirs, and passages — nothing is wanting — and the tree which holds them, although it stands blackened and withered, gives no other sign, outwardly, of the secret that it holds; yet there it stands, the merest and frailest shell in reality. The wood-carving ants only work at night. I know why very well. They kill the trees by cutting their roots in carving out their houses. They are very wicked to do this, and wicked ants as well as wicked people are afraid of the light of day; it is as much as they can do to bear the light of the moon.

All the rest of the week we were taken up with the ants. We looked for them in the fields, and we amused ourselves, Marguerite and I, in looking at their nests and following them on their excursions.

I hope the reader has been interested in hearing of my ants. And now I am going to tell you a wonderful story, which we have seen and read in a book ; there is a fine picture, too, which tells about it.

A traveller, who was also a painter, was in a village in India. He used to go into the forests to sketch the trees. One day, when he was busy making a drawing of the trunk of a tree, he saw different kinds of insects and also some lizards passing about near him. Marguerite would have run away at once had she been in his place, but the painter only worked on the faster, thinking that the presence of these creatures betokened a storm. He also heard the cries of birds around him, and having a good mile to go before getting home, and fearing it would come on to rain, he put away his drawing and was getting ready to begin his march, when all at once, he was covered from head to foot by a cloud of ants. He jumped up quickly — so quickly that he overturned his color-box. He wanted to pick it up, but that was impossible. It was covered with ants, and they were piled several inches deep, one on top of another. At last he tried to save his gun, but it was thickly covered all over with ants, and he

got badly stung before he chased them off. The bite of ants of that species are much worse than those in our own country, which only leave a little red mark on the skin when they sting you.

My talk about the ants is somewhat long, I will grant; but as Marguerite says I must put some interesting things into my memoirs, and not be always speaking of ourselves, I beg the reader to be of Marguerite's way of thinking.





CHAPTER XXIV.

HOSPITALITY.

DURING the first few days after our recovery from the measles, we said many times a day to each other, "How nice it is not to be sick any more!" But soon getting used to being well, we forgot to remark how delightful it was.

I had grown a great deal, and I was very well pleased to be told of it, only I could not bear the malicious pleasantry of an old neighbor of ours, who used to say to me every time that he came on a visit to us, with an evident enjoyment of my discomfiture, "Bad herbs thrive apace." I finished by getting cross over it, and one day I said to him :

"Sir, if it were only the bad herbs that thrive, we should not have such a beautiful garden and such a fine avenue of trees; and I am not a bad herb, thank you."

Mamma made me hush, and scolded me a little, but only a little, which was as much as to say that she wasn't sorry that I had silenced our old neighbor so promptly. Marguerite also listened with evident satisfaction.

We had now resumed our studies in the routine which we had followed before we had been ill, and everybody said that we were doing very well, and so the time passed quickly, and papa and mamma invented little pleasure-parties to recompense us. At the moment when we least expected it, papa would come into the school-room and say, —

“Come, children, come and take a walk with me up the mountain. There’s no harm in interrupting the studies of such good scholars.”

How quickly we bounded up and embraced papa ! How soon we were upon the road ! The donkey was often of our party, because mamma was afraid that Marguerite would overtire herself. But Marguerite never mounted upon Goodfoot unless in obedience to papa’s orders. You should have seen her trotting about in a pair of gaiters that reached to her knees, and with her cane in her hand. Her greatest delight was to search the mountains for flowers for Catherine, who is a great florist. We used to stop to rest in the barns by the wayside, and papa would tell us stories about Africa, and we were well satisfied.

Going a-fishing is another of our pleasures. We both have little fishing-lines. I always put the worm on Marguerite’s hook for her, because she is afraid of worms, toads, bugs, and everything of the sort. I think mamma ought to scold her a little for that. Little girls are afraid of everything — it is so ridiculous of them. But for all that you must not think that I ever imitate those bad boys who take

pleasure in frightening their sisters. That is very ugly ; it is worse, it is shameful. I try to reason with Marguerite, and when I see her afraid of a toad, I say to her, —

“Sister, what harm do you think that little creature can do to you ? Come and look at it — it will not hurt you.”

Marguerite listens to me, but she doesn't breathe freely until the toad hops away out of sight.

I haven't spoken to you much lately of my friend Cyril, and yet I love him as much as ever. We were waiting for vacation, and when it came Cyril came to us with it.

What pleasure it is to receive in your own home your favorite school-mate — to take him about and show him the things that make your home so attractive. Everything so familiar to you gains a new value in your eyes, when you see that it has for him the charm of novelty. Cyril had hardly descended from the carriage that brought him when I at once took possession of him, and led him to see all the things that I loved best. I was so proud in showing him our country home. I saw how pleased and surprised he was. As his papa lives in India he has no country house. But Cyril says that he will have one by and by, and then I am to go and spend the vacations, in my turn, with my friend.

I was quite wild with joy, not only because I love Cyril, and because I was so glad to have him enjoy himself with me away from school, but because he knows a great many games, and can ride

well on horseback, and isn't afraid of anything; and then he likes everything that I like. English had become so familiar to me that we talked it now almost always. Miss Arabella was radiant. She cut slices of bread and butter night and morning, and again in the middle of the day. Mamma, who never loses sight of the *practical*, would say to Marguerite and me, —

“See now, my children, how agreeable it is for you to know a foreign language. You will find it very convenient to know how to speak and understand English when we go to England.”

And we would reply, “O yes, mamma!”

We did not content ourselves with conversation. We had a small English library; and if my dear reader wishes to be amused and instructed he has only to read as we did, — “The Boys' Own Book;” “Evenings at Home;” “Hymns” by Mrs. Barbauld; “Sandford and Merton;” “Nursery Rhymes;” “Rosamond and Harry;” “Frank and Mary;” “Parent's Assistant” and “Popular Tales,” by Miss Edgeworth.

We read all these pretty books just as if we had been real English children.

Cyril draws very well. He always has a drawing-book in his pocket, and when he sees a mountain that pleases him he sketches it. He draws animals, too. I asked him to draw the portrait of our dog, and he succeeded very well. One day papa received a letter from Mr. Anderson, the father of Cyril. He had arrived at Liverpool, and he had

hastened to write, thanking papa for his kindness to Cyril.

He requested that if papa had occasion to go to Paris, he would be so good as to take Cyril in charge so far, and there he would meet him, and they would take passage from Boulogne.

Mamma smiled, and looked at papa.

I at once became possessed of the idea that we were all to go up to Paris with Cyril, and I became very curious to know more about it; and to this end I did some very mean things, so mean and ugly that I am going to punish myself by telling you of them.

Whenever I saw papa and mamma talking together, I got near them and pretended to be playing or reading, but in truth I was always trying to get a chance to hear what they were saying. That was not all. One night when they were talking of Cyril's departure, the hour for going to bed came, and we had to go. Marguerite and I were not in the habit of putting on discontented faces when it was time to go to bed, but on that night I couldn't help an involuntary grimace. I got into bed, but I could not sleep; and not hearing any noise, I at last got up and walked softly, with bare feet, as far as the door of the little sitting-room. It was bright moonlight, and I saw my figure in a mirror in passing, and I was ashamed of myself. I looked just like a little thief. I was just going back to bed when curiosity again overcame me, and I put my ear to the keyhole of the door. I heard mamma

say, "Georges! Let us go to Paris with the children, and you go with Cyril as far as England."

I wanted very much to hear the rest of the conversation, but I was too much afraid of being surprised; and I knew already that it was enough for mamma to wish a thing to gain papa's consent to it. I retreated with the same caution with which I had come, and I went to sleep believing myself the happiest of little boys.

The next day, to my great surprise, I was no longer content; and I felt only shame even when I was saying to myself, how happy I ought to be. Marguerite asked me several times during the day what was the matter with me.

If anybody had told me that in satisfying my curiosity I should make myself unhappy, I should not have believed it. But I saw myself, in fancy, continually crossing the *salon*, and lived my guilty fright all over again. At last I could contain myself no longer, and I took Marguerite down to the end of the avenue, saying I had a great secret to tell her. My sister thought that it was some surprise I was preparing for mamma. When she heard my story she grew red, as if the shame of my act had been all hers and not mine."

"Ah, brother!" said she, without saying anything about the excursion; "you ought to be very sorry for what you have done. If I were in your place I would go at once to papa and confess my fault."

"Do you want him to scold me?" I said.

“Never mind if he does. You will be better satisfied afterwards. O! it is so ugly to be curious. And then papa and mamma always talk so much before us, and if they don’t wish us to know a thing we ought not to try to find it out.”

I was greatly mortified on hearing Marguerite talk so. All the consolation I received was that my sister advised me to go and get myself a scolding! Add to this that she did not seem at all delighted with the fine discovery that I had made.

However, after having thought it over a long time by myself, I resolved to follow Marguerite’s advice, and it was decided that I should go and tell mamma of what I had done. She would be very sure to tell papa of it, at the same time begging him to appear not to know anything about it.

I profited by a moment when my little mother was quite alone, and under the pretense of obtaining some permission which had been already accorded to us, I entered the *salon*. She said, —

“What do you want, my dear child?”

“O, I want to tell you a very ugly story, mamma!”

And without once raising my eyes to look at her, I told her all, without passing over anything.

She said, in a tone of surprise, — “My son, that was a very base action; but when the culprit denounces himself, it is because he feels the greatness of his fault. I will not scold you, my child. I will only tell you that you exposed yourself to be surprised at any moment by your father, who would

have judged of your behavior with great severity, and you also exposed yourself to the risk of being seen by our servants—and then what kind of an opinion would they have had of their little master? My son, when you want to know a thing, you must ask us. We will answer your questions if we think them proper ones.”

Mamma (she is so good!) embraced me, adding that the courage with which I had acted in confessing my fault, would certainly help in causing it to be forgotten.

After that, I had such a horror of being curious, that sometimes thinking I detected myself giving way to the feeling, I would put my hands to my ears or sing loudly when I saw papa and mamma talking together, so as not to hear what they were saying. So nobody else knew anything about this occurrence except Marguerite, who told me that papa was ignorant of it. As for me I believe that mamma tells papa everything, and that it is agreed between them that he is only to scold upon great occasions, and that mamma is to scold on all the little occasions, so I believe he knew all about it.

I said to Marguerite: “How do you manage to be always so good?”

“I don’t think I am,” she said; “but I think before all things of pleasing papa and mamma. I say in the morning, when I say my prayers, ‘I want to try to be very good and very amiable to-day;’ and at night I think over the day, and when I see that I have not kept to my good resolutions, I begin again

the next day, and the next — it is always going on like that.”

I resolved to imitate Marguerite. Bah! a nice mess I made of it. She always gets ahead of me! Don't you love Marguerite?

Cyril thought of nothing but of going back to England. He was always asking papa if it would be soon. We looked together on the map to see the route he must take.

Once Cyril said that the sea was the most beautiful thing in the world. But I said “No! the mountains are the most beautiful.” We both, all of a sudden, got as mad as two little fighting cocks. Cyril having jostled me a little, I in return pushed him much harder, and then a fight began.

Marguerite thought at first that we were playing. She didn't think so long, and she ran away to call for help.

Papa's arrival quickly calmed us. I took up the discourse to explain to papa what we were quarreling about. Papa burst out laughing; that was all the effect that my eloquence had on him. He took me by the ears, saying, —

“You don't know what you are talking about, for you have never seen the sea. You are two little simpletons, my young gentlemen! All the works of God are beautiful, and merit our admiration. Cyril thinks, I suppose, that some of the glory of the ocean which encircles his country is reflected upon him. And you imagine that Mount Pancrace and Mount Pelvou give you some importance, be-

cause they are in your native country. Come, be good friends as you have always been. We will all go with our dear Cyril as far as Paris."

At this news I threw myself into the arms of my friend, and I felt that I loved him even more than I had done before the battle.

Marguerite did not like the idea very well, and Catherine did not like it at all. If mamma were to listen to my nurse we should never go anywhere. I know very well that it is a great deal of trouble to pack up, and that putting things into a trunk is not so amusing as taking them out; but like many other things in this world it has to be done, so what is the use of complaining?

I have often wondered at the patience with which mamma always treats dear Catherine. I spoke of it to Marguerite, and she replied, —

"Brother, I think it is quite right. When you and I were very little our nurse used to rock us and watch us all night, and that for many nights together, and sing to us too. You don't remember anything about that; but mamma does, and she will never forget it."

"Well, I don't care! If I didn't love Catherine so well, I should soon get very tired of her, she worries so much!"

I see now, that what I have just written doesn't look pretty on paper, but I won't scratch it out. I don't want you to think that I am perfect. O no! I am very often bad tempered. I always want to have my own way, and consult my own conven-



"And then a fight began." Page 225.

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ience. But don't think too hardly of me, for I know it is wrong. I restrain myself as much as I can, and when it happens, as it often does, that I render myself insupportable, I begin over again trying to be good and unselfish.

In spite of the pleasure I felt in the anticipation of seeing so many things entirely new to me, I felt my heart sad within me at the idea of leaving our beautiful country home. The trees were covered with fruit, and the hay-makers had come. I had need to remember all that Paul and Nono had told me about Paris, to console myself for leaving all the peaches and grapes to be eaten by somebody else, for I am something of a *gourmand*. If the reader is also one he will pardon me, feeling his mouth water at the idea of our peaches and grapes. This is just the place to tell you of a little incident of my childhood. I was four years old, and I was present at a grand family dinner where there were many good friends of papa's. I sat at mamma's side, and I was very proud to be in the society of grown people. Mamma had said to me, "A little boy must not eat of everything that he sees before him; he must even deny himself the pleasure of eating some of the things on the table." I seemed to have no objection to follow mamma's advice, and after behaving very well for a little while, I said in her ear, "Mamma, I have not eaten any beef—I have denied myself the pleasure of eating it; and now I may eat of *everything*, may I not?"

Forgive me for writing about such trifles. I like

to remember all these little nothings now that I am big !

Cyril and I did all we could to amuse ourselves, but the time seemed very long to us. We talked of nothing but our journey ; and then when papa said that he had decided to take me with him to London, O ! how enraptured we were. Cyril in his joy did all sorts of nonsensical things, and he could talk of nothing but the Thames, and packet-boats, and sea-sickness. I listened to him admiringly ; and no small share of my admiration was reserved for myself, when I thought that I should go to a strange country, and that I already knew the language of that country !

French was entirely put to one side now. We played in English, we eat in English, we loved each other in English, we dreamed in English ! Any one of us who broke this rule had to pay a forfeit ! There never was a happier governess than Miss Arabella, for the time that this Britannic fantasy lasted us.





CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEPARTURE. — PARIS.

AT last, in spite of Catherine's slowness, all was ready, and one fine day we set out for Paris. Little Xavier clapped his hands joyfully as we started off.

We looked back at the chateau and at our beautiful mountains until we could no longer see them. My nurse would certainly have been angry with Cyril, if any one could be angry with him — he being the primary cause of our leaving home. But his neat figure pleased her; so did his gay good humor, and the little stories which he would tell us in French with such an amusing accent.

I need not remind you of the peculiar pleasure which we feel when everything has been attended to and at last we are free to step into the railway-carriage and are whirled away at the rate of so many miles an hour. Then the gratification we have in getting out as often as we can whenever the train stops for a few minutes, the excitement of hurried bargains at the refreshment stand, the race

back to our places when the whistle sounds, the relief experienced when we throw ourselves back, panting and out of breath, into our seats, — you know all about that. Let us get quickly to Paris! Unhappily, I can't share my impression of the journey with you, because in spite of my eight years (it was last year) I followed little Xavier's example, and I was so sleepy when we got to Paris, that I hardly knew where we were, and the next morning when I awoke I thought I was still dreaming. Little by little my ideas came back to me, and I cried out in a tone and with a manner fully fitted to express my joy, "I am at Paris! at Paris! at Paris!" And without waiting to be asked I got up and ran to the window, which was on the second floor of the Hôtel Brighton in the Rue de Rivoli. If you have been in Paris, you have certainly passed through that beautiful street, and you can imagine my surprise, my joy, on seeing a beautiful garden where there were some children already at play.

I began to dress without any noise, just as soberly as a little man. Catherine would have been glad if she had been allowed to wash me and put on my clothes for me, to "*dress me up*," as she phrased it, great boy though I was; but mamma thought it would be very ridiculous if a boy eight years old should not know how to dress himself. Besides, I do it very well for myself. I like to be clean, and I have perhaps too great a liking for plenty of cold water, so that very often I fill the wash-bowl too full, and it overflows, and Catherine gets provoked with me.

Very soon Marguerite came to tell me that she was ready, and that papa wanted to profit by the fine weather to take us out for a walk.

M. Hersant had remained in the country. Although I love my tutor a great deal, I bore his absence very well, for the very good reason that the name of tutor is synonymous with themes, translations, and all the rest. In spite of the certainty which I had that study was to be suspended during our short stay at Paris, still I felt reassured in knowing that M. Hersant was a hundred miles from us. It wasn't altogether ingratitude on my part. Oughtn't he to have a little time to himself in which to make excursions into the mountains — that good M. Hersant?

Cyril knew Paris; and I remarked that he gave himself some slight airs of importance in talking to us about the beautiful things that we should see.

Papa and mamma were as gay as we were; they were amused by our surprise and our exclamations. If they had not been in the habit of taking an interest in all that interested us, their embarrassment would have been great at this time, for Catherine, the good and gentle Catherine, declared that she did not want to go out into all that confusion and noise; that it was enough to turn one's head, and that we should certainly be brought back with our arms and legs broken. All her excursions were limited to going to the Church of Saint-Roch with us, and I can assure you she was very far from being at her ease in traversing the Rue St. Honoré.

I don't know how it is that I should have forgotten to tell you about a certain amateur entertainment given by Punch and Judy, at the house of one of our country neighbors, at which I was present and which had greatly annoyed me. A kind lady had assembled all the children of the neighborhood to see Punch and Judy, and the wicked Punch had publicly recounted the individual history of each one of us present. It was a great mistake on his part, for seeing that we had all been alike denounced to him, we were less sensitive in regard to his disclosures. I had not retained any grudge against him for the annoyance he had given me personally, and I consented to go and see him again in Paris. This time he appeared to me very amiable, and even very complimentary. I suppose he has to be so at Paris, to make people like him.

Marguerite and I were greatly astonished and pleased by the Champs Élysées, the Bois de Boulogne, the Jardin d'Acclimatation, Versailles, and Saint-Cloud. Papa explained everything to us. The beasts, the birds, the little fishes excited our enthusiasm. I didn't care any more about going to England. But I did not say so to Cyril. My forbearance was but just, for he did not tell me that he was all impatience to be gone, yet I could see it plainly, nevertheless.

You know that papa is very good; but I haven't told you that he had taken upon himself the bringing up of a poor little blind boy. Mamma wished Louis to be placed in the Institution for the Blind in Paris,



"I consented to go and see him again in Paris." Page 234.

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because he is very intelligent and can be easily instructed. He makes us baskets and cages ; and as for me, I don't know what I should do without him.

Being at Paris we thought of Louis and talked of him, and it was decided that all of us except Xavier should go to the school for the blind.

I shall never forget that visit ; I have no need to consult my sister to aid me in recollecting it. I remember it as if it had been yesterday. You shall see. As this institution for the blind is an important one, I shall repeat for you what papa told us on our way there.

It is about eighty years since the idea of instructing the blind was first taken up and followed out at Paris. This is how it began. One evening in summer, several poor blind people, some nine or ten, perhaps, were assembled in a place where a great many people were passing. They pretended to play on several musical instruments ; and to attract and amuse the passers-by, they had set up music racks with sheets of music upon them, and they had spectacles perched upon their noses. The inconsistency was ludicrous enough to draw attention to them, and their pitiful burlesque was rewarded with some small contributions, though the noise they made was frightful, and would in other circumstances have elicited nothing but abuse. Well, among the gentlemen who stopped to listen was a Mr. Valentin Haüy, and he began to think it would be a good work if one could really teach

music to the blind. Since these unfortunates divine everything by the touch, he thought there must be some yet unknown means of utilizing this wonderful faculty of theirs. And so he began to rack his brain for a successful answer to his own questions.

A young man sixteen years old, blind almost from birth, was brought to him, recommended as being of extraordinary intelligence. Haüy (papa did not say Mr.) applied himself to the improvement of his protégé, and was greatly gratified at the progress made by the lad, who was very happy to study and to be instructed in place of begging at the door of a church as he had hitherto done.

This incident became the subject of general conversation, and was at last spoken of at the court of the king (Louis XVI.). Some great people combined together and interested themselves for the blind to such an extent that a house was obtained for their reception and education. But that was not the one which we went to visit.

The progress of the blind pensioners was rapid. The king and the queen wanted to see these poor children. They were taken to Versailles, where they were made to pass an examination. When the royal family was retiring, the blind children sang a hymn in chorus. They were kept eight days at the Chateau of Versailles.

I think they must have had good dinners!

Ever since that time attention has been paid by the state to the blind children, and to-day they have a fine house on the Boulevard des Invalides to

live in, where we arrived just as papa finished telling us what I have been repeating to you.

The superintendent of the establishment received us. He has a kind manner and seems very affable. Papa and mamma talked with him about little Louis. It seemed a long time to us, for it kept us from seeing the blind children at study. At last we went into a class-room. Some twenty boys were seated on benches along the wall. The master who sat before a little table was dictating to them. All the scholars were writing, but not with a pen. They made deep and salient marks on coarse paper which was framed in a small table made expressly for this purpose, to which was attached a sort of movable ruler in a groove, which helped them to write in straight lines.

Their alphabet was composed of ten raised marks placed in different positions, and sufficing for all their needs. Figures are learned and written in the same way.

We could not get over our astonishment, Marguerite and I, at all that we saw ; but what astonished us the most was to see that the master was also blind. He ran his fingers very quickly over the pages before him, which were printed in raised characters, and dictated from them. He was so kind as to show us a large book which he took from a book-case which was kept locked, and in which we saw the alphabet. Then a scholar got up and parsed what had been dictated. He made a very good analysis. I thought M. Hersant would be

very well satisfied if I only knew the participles as well as that blind boy knew them.

They teach these poor children to read and write, and after that comes grammar, history, geography. They learn natural science also, that is to say, botany, ornithology, entomology, etc. When they are older they are taught foreign languages, mathematics (algebra), and universal history, and they have books made expressly for them, in which they read prose and poetry. It takes six months to teach a blind person to read. That is not much. If they don't know how to read at the end of a year, they are given up. And I, was two years in learning, or rather two years not wanting to learn! These good little blind students learn the scale and the theory of harmony, and to play on musical instruments, particularly the organ. O! how glad I am that they can sing and amuse themselves a little.

We went into various workshops — first into the shop where they make baskets and brushes. There is a master-workman who can see, and who gives them lessons. This workman told us that a blind apprentice makes nearly one hundred francs a year. He isn't allowed to have it all for himself; but they allow him to keep a little of it as a recompense. I feel sure that these blind people would rather work for nothing at all than sit all day with their arms crossed. We saw one of the new scholars making a brush of couch-grass for the first time; he was very nice-looking, and Cyril took his portrait. There is a workshop where they rebottom chairs.

A woman gives lessons in doing this. And then we went to a shop where there was a turning-lathe. I could hardly believe that these tall, active, fine-looking young men were blind, they worked so fast and made such pretty cups. The workmen who surprised us most were the book-binders ; they threaded their large needles as quickly as Catherine does hers. You should have seen them all in a group, sewing the leaves together ! O, how contented the good Haüy would be if he could return to the midst of his protégés ! There is a printing-office where all the books that are used in the institution are printed. I forgot to tell you that we saw three hundred bound volumes.

We saw a lesson given on the piano. The scholar did the scale in C minor (so mamma said). The blind master stood up and followed with his fingers all the notes printed in raised characters on the page of music before him, and corrected the scholar when he went wrong. As for me, I talked and asked questions all the time. Cyril and Marguerite did not say anything ; but later you will see that my sister was thinking none the less of all that she saw.

We went into the dining-rooms, and into the kitchen, and at last into the chapel, — a handsome chapel, ornamented with paintings, which didn't escape the attention of my dear Cyril.

Then we went into the girls' department. There are some sixty girls, and about one hundred and forty boys. We were told that the girls were taught

in the same manner as the boys. Knitting and netting of all kinds are the habitual employments of the girls. Much of their time is given to music. A young girl of sixteen played us a very pretty piece.

Our visit ended with the show-room, where the different objects manufactured by the blind are exhibited — cups and boxes and other articles turned by the boys, and quantities of purses and netted shawls and all kinds of knitted work made by the girls.

It is not necessary that I should tell you that papa and mamma bought some of the things, but still I tell you all the same, because I have pleasure in doing so. If my sister and I had been in possession of any money, we should certainly have spent it among our friends, the good blind children — yes, they are good, pious, grateful, and thoughtful. They have good reason to love God with all their hearts, and to be well beloved; I am sure this is the reason why they are not sad and unhappy, as we might suppose they would be under such a heavy affliction.

The superintendent invited us to a concert which was to be given the following week. Papa declined the invitation, because we had to leave for England.

O, how much pleasure I had from this visit. I thought much more of it than I did of our visit to the Botanical Garden, or even the Garden of Acclimatation. I tried to think how it would feel to be blind, by shutting my eyes as I walked

along. Papa moralized a little on the exemplary conduct of the blind children, their industry and resignation.

When I found myself alone with my sister, we talked freely about it. She was sad. She said, —

“Henri, it wasn’t seeing the children that affected me so much as looking at their blind masters. How good they must be not to get tired of giving lessons when they cannot see. O, how sorry I should be if papa and mamma were blind !”

“And if I were blind, Marguerite, wouldn’t you be as sorry for me ?” I said.

“O yes, indeed, brother ! but I would be very good to you — so hush !”

But I said, “I shouldn’t see you any more, Marguerite ; I shouldn’t see the blue and pink clouds on the Savoy side at sunset, from our terrace in the country ; and I shouldn’t see you when you grew up, nor should I know if you wore beautiful dresses and a bonnet of nice straw, with bunches of lilacs, like mamma’s.”

Then I wanted to play at being blind, but Marguerite looked at the matter more seriously and would not.

It was hardly day-break the next morning, when we were all awakened suddenly by loud screams from Marguerite. Mamma ran trembling to my sister’s bedside, where Catherine already was trying to awaken her. Marguerite had the nightmare, and dreamed that she was blind. Mamma took her upon her lap and asked to have the

shutters opened. I had come in by this time, and I saw poor Marguerite still trembling and crying. Papa seemed agitated and dissatisfied. He said, —

“You were right, Anna; we ought not to have taken her with us; she is too nervous to be taken to such places.”

At last Marguerite became calm. Mamma kissed her eyes gently, and looked at her, and the expression of her face seemed to say, “No! my darling little girl is not blind; she has sweet and pretty blue eyes which I never tire of looking at.”

Mamma was afraid that Marguerite might have the nightmare again, and so she had my sister's bed put at the side of her own.

To turn our thoughts from what we had seen at the blind asylum, papa took us to see Robert Houdin. His idea was a success, and in place of dreaming about blind people we could dream of nothing but tricks with cards, flowers, and bonbons; and it was almost as good as a real conjurer's entertainment to hear us tell our dreams.

The rain put a stop to our plays in the Tuileries gardens. We had nothing to do but watch from our windows the passers-by floundering in the mud and jostling each other with their umbrellas. Catherine thinks Paris is very disagreeable when it rains. I am a little of her way of thinking.



CHAPTER XXVI.

MR. ANDERSON. — THE SEA. — LONDON.

MR. ANDERSON arrived promptly on the day which had been fixed upon, and came to look for us at our hotel. Cyril threw himself into his father's arms. They were both of them very glad, doubtless, but English joy is not like French joy. Mr. Anderson was tall, thin, and somewhat sallow. He was astonished, stupefied, at hearing us speak his language fluently, and testified the satisfaction which this surprise caused him, by frequent and hearty shakes of the hand. He thanked papa and mamma for the kindness which they had shown to Cyril. He thanked me also, saying, —

"You ought to ask your father, Master Henri, to let you go over to England with us. I should be very happy to do the honors of my country for you."

"We have already so decided, Monsieur," replied my mamma, "and I shall stay here until Riri returns with his father."

Said papa, "This journey must be undertaken from motives of necessity — to settle a quarrel between these two friends. We must give them

both the chance of judging impartially whether the sea is really more beautiful and grand than our Dauphinian Alps."

Mr. Anderson laughed heartily, but I saw very well that he thought as Cyril did, and that he put the ocean before all else.

But it wasn't the moment to recommence the discussion.

Papa invited Mr. Anderson to dine with us. The dinner was very gay; and we parted, saying to one another, "Until to-morrow!"

Cyril was no longer the same boy. He walked with a more assured step, and even with a certain air of pride. This is not to be wondered at; a little boy feels himself of so little importance when he hasn't his father or mother to protect him and scold him. I should be very unhappy if it were not so in my case; and the sight of that big Mr. Anderson rejoiced me, because I love Cyril, and his happiness is a good deal my own.

Catherine nourished at the bottom of her heart a secret hope that something would occur to prevent my voyage. She thought that I was only jesting when I told her it was all arranged that we were to leave on the morrow. Mamma had to speak to her seriously about it. Then, at last, she began reluctantly to pack up my things with papa's in papa's trunk. Dear Catherine, she told me that night, that she wished that big Englishman had stayed at home.

And what did my little sister say? Well, I

said to her first, "Are you jealous, Marguerite, at seeing me go away to London with papa?"

"Jealous, Riri? I always want to see you happy. You will be greatly pleased with your trip, and so I am glad you are going. I know it would not be as easy to take me as it is to take you; if I were to fall sick, papa would be greatly perplexed. All I ask is, that you will bring me some needles, and that you will try to remember all that you see, so that you can tell me about it."

And then I promised my sister to write up a little journal for her every evening, and I kept my word, although it cost me some trouble. I little thought at the time that this journal would one day find a place in my memoirs.

The next morning at seven o'clock I was ready. I couldn't help looking at myself in the glass. It wasn't from vanity; but the idea that I was going to England gave me so much importance in my own eyes, that I wanted to see how I looked, to study the face of a boy of eight years of age, who was about to have such a dignity conferred upon him.

But my enthusiasm did not prevent the tears from filling my eyes when I said good-by to mamma. I had not quitted her since my short stay at school. I was in the habit of kissing her every morning and night, and many times during the day, and now I should not see her or kiss her at all for fifteen days. She saw very well what I was thinking of, and she put on a gay face, although I know she felt even more sad than I did; and when we came back from

England, mamma told me that she had been glad to see I was sorry at the thought of leaving her.

Mamma and Marguerite went with us to the railway station. Mr. Anderson and Cyril were there, and their baggage had been already weighed and disposed of. Very soon the bell rang, and we had to separate.

My sorrow was soon dissipated. I was satisfied with my surroundings, and I began to look at things about me, and to laugh. The people around me began to take notice of me. They all thought I was ten years old at the least.

The road between Paris and Boulogne is not pretty. I would have been glad to go to sleep, as did a fat gentleman in front of me, but I was not in the least sleepy. Still, I did not find it dull. I got out as often as I could when we stopped, not only for the pleasure of moving about, but to do as everybody else did, and not to look like a little boy only eight years old! And then there was the refreshment stand; you know it is not the least agreeable feature of the scenery when one is travelling by rail. Papa let me take what I wanted. He could tell you of the prudence with which I availed myself of the liberty he gave me. As it is, I will charge myself with the agreeable task of telling you that I did not behave greedily. On the contrary I controlled my appetite.

Cyril asked me what I supposed the sea looked like, and I made purposely such nonsensical answers that we both laughed heartily, and our papas also.

At last we reached Boulogne. The travellers collected their baggage and got quickly into such carriages as they could find, and all hurried away, just as if they had been going to the railway station. I asked Cyril the reason of all this haste. He replied calmly that it was on account of *the tide*. The tide! I was no further advanced than I was when I had asked him the question. I thought papa must know, but there was no time just then to ask about it. We went over the bridge, and then I saw the quays, and the hotels, and the sea tumbling in, in great waves, and a packet-boat, from the chimney of which a thick, black smoke curled up. Papa kept my hand in his, for there was a great crowd. People were walking about hurriedly, and making a great noise. My heart began to beat faster and faster, as we neared the steamer.

Papa said to me, "Well, Henri! have you still a mind to go?"

"Yes," said I bravely. "Yes, certainly, papa. I am a little afraid, but I know you wouldn't bring me if there were any danger."

"Ah, here is a little boy who can speak sensibly!" said an English lady near us, delighted with an opportunity for showing off her French.

My fright did not last long. Once upon the packet-boat I could almost have believed myself playing at see-saw, which is my favorite game.

At last we were off. Boom! boom! boom! Papa watched me, but Cyril turned his great eyes here and there, and everywhere, and paid no more attention to me than he did to the other people.

Papa is never seasick ; and he was glad to find that I followed his example, insomuch that becoming little by little used to the motion, I at last began to amuse myself with what was passing about me. The weather was splendid. The waves sparkled as they melted into each other. The further we went the finer it became. I couldn't take my eyes off the waves.

Alas ! and alas ! I very soon saw something not so pretty ! it was Cyril, half lying, half sitting on the deck, and very sick. He was pale, so pale that I thought he was going to die, and I began to cry. Papa told me that Cyril would be cured as soon as he had quitted the steamer, and so I didn't cry any more, but I was very sorry for my friend.

O what a mistake you will make if you believe that I wasn't thinking of my mother and my little sister ! On the contrary I said to myself, "Mamma knew the hour when the *La Manche* (our steamer) was to leave Boulogne, and she will certainly think of us. When mamma is uneasy she prays to the good God, and so I need not be alarmed, for we shall have a safe voyage." And so we did.

At the end of two hours we were at Folkstone. Poor Cyril was picked up and carried off the steamer as if he had been a limp bundle. That wasn't a very glorious thing for a little Englishman who boasted so much about the sea ! Ah, my mountains, it is not so with you ! There we breathe pure air, too, but it never makes us seasick !

So now, we were directly on the way to London.

In spite of the cheerful face which I kept up I was tired, and when we were settled in the railway carriage, I thought there was a horrible noise, because the train went so fast. I fell asleep and did not wake until the next morning, when I found myself at the Hotel Mivart, near Hyde Park.

I wonder if you are like me. When I sleep in a strange bed, I never know where I am when I awake in the morning. In London I was greatly perplexed when I awoke, on account of the street cries, which are not at all like those in Paris. Papa came to my aid. After I heard him say "Good morning, Master Henri!" I quite recollected where I was.

We talked for a little while about mamma and Marguerite and little Xavier; it seemed almost as if we could hear and see them. So as we were already impatient to get back to France, and as it was a fine morning, we got up and began to get ready to go out for a walk. And now, I found out what an advantage it is for a little boy to know how to dress himself without help. I didn't give papa any trouble. He was so surprised and pleased at the neat way in which I dressed myself, that he bought me a dressing-case. If I had been a slovenly little fellow, I know my papa would never have thought of making me such a present. Then we breakfasted after the English fashion, the "fresh eggs" excepted, because they are never fresh in London. I am going to tell you why. The English always eat eggs boiled in the shell at breakfast,

and so there is a great demand for them. They are sent over to London from different parts of France, at the rate of thirty or forty millions a year. Yes, it is so, for papa told me. And you will understand that they cannot be so fresh as those we get at our country home, or even in Paris. But we took tea, and I had a large cup of it, which made me feel extremely important.

We had almost finished our breakfast, when Mr. Anderson and Cyril came in. They had come to take us out with them to see London. O, how happy I was! A fine carriage was waiting for us; for Mr. Anderson is what they call in England an East Indian merchant, and his business brings him a great deal of money.

I should be much perplexed if I had to give you a formal description of London. Please remember that I was only eight years old, and although well advanced for my age, still I was only a raw little traveller as yet. So I will only try to tell you what I saw as it comes into my mind.

LONDON.

There are many bridges on the Thames, which looks like the sea. I remember London Bridge, and Westminster Bridge, Waterloo Bridge, and the Hungerford Suspension Bridge.

On the Thames you see a great many little steam-boats. They tear and puff along at a great rate, and it is very amusing to watch them.

Our first visit was to the British Museum.

Cyril was pleased with the chance of explaining anything to me, while our papas were talking. I was greatly impressed with this museum, for I had never seen any other except that at Grenoble, which is not so fine. I thought the mummies were very ugly, and I wouldn't have stopped near them very long, for I wanted to go and see the magnificent stuffed birds ; but Cyril was full of stories about them, to which there was no end. And what did I care to know that these ugly mummies had been people, embalmed and wrapped around and around with bandages by the Egyptians, and that they were perhaps two thousand years old ?

At last we went to see the stuffed beasts. They looked as if they were alive. There were also a great many stones and dried plants and other curiosities.

Papa very soon saw that I wasn't much amused, and we got into the carriage again to go to the Crystal Palace, which is six miles from London. It takes three miles to make a league. The horses were going at a gallop, when all at once we saw ladies and children and nurses all moving one way. " O ! " said Cyril, " it is only Punch and Judy."

Punch and Judy in London are just like Punch and Judy in Paris, only they don't stay at home to receive visits. They go about the streets, and stop here and there to give representations. Punch is a naughty fellow who is always beating his wife, and that makes everybody laugh. I don't like Punch, and so we didn't stop long.

The Crystal Palace, built on the hills of Norwood, was designed by one of the chief public gardeners of London. Figure to yourself an immense hall all covered with glass, and with galleries without and inside of it. It was here that the Great Exhibition took place. Now, they keep the different products of English manufacture on view here. I did not feel much interested in them, but it was made up to me in the gardens, where there are fountains and cascades and green grass — grass as green as mamma's green velvet dress.

Papa was almost afraid to take me to Westminster Abbey, thinking it too serious a place for a boy of my age to go to. He was agreeably surprised when he saw me opening my eyes in wonder at all those grand tombs and fine statues. Cyril doesn't know the history of England very well yet. I asked him several questions which he could not answer. But Mr. Anderson knew everything and talked enough to please anybody, and that is very convenient when you don't know London.

In connection with Westminster he told us a story. The king of England, who founded this institution, had a wife who was very good and very wise. One day the queen met a little scholar called Ingulphus, who was going to the college. She stopped him, and made him pass an examination in grammar and logic as he stood in the middle of the street. She was so pleased with the way in which he answered, that she rewarded him, and

promised him other recompenses if he would continue to study so well. This little boy became a very learned man, and wrote books, and he did not forget to mention in them his meeting with the Queen Editha, which was natural. Mr. Anderson continued, turning to papa, that the Abbey had been inhabited in former times by the Benedictines, and that Caxton had there established the first printing-press, of which these ecclesiastics made so much use.

I listened with avidity to all Mr. Anderson said ; but if I hadn't written it down in my little journal, I think I should have forgotten all about it. Above all, I thought it was very amiable of the Queen Editha to stop to talk to a little boy in the street.

Cyril had spoken to me enthusiastically about Madame Tussaud's exhibition of wax figures, so we went there. I didn't tell Cyril, but the truth is that Madame Tussaud and her wax figures did not amuse me. She is a Frenchwoman. It wasn't anything new to me, for I had seen just such things at Lyons.

As to the Tower of London, that's quite a different thing. Well and good ! Knights in iron armor, — that is something interesting for military officers, and for little boys who want to be officers.

Papa and Mr. Anderson talked a great deal, and they disputed a little — I don't know why. O yes, now I remember.. It was about a wicked queen, Queen Elizabeth. I saw her. She was on horseback in a room full of all sorts of instruments and machines, with which she had tortured and killed

a great many people. O what a wicked queen ! I detest her !¹

The Tower isn't very cheerful, I'll own. We heard the history of two little princes, who ought to have been kings of England, and who were killed in this tower. Do you want to know this story ? I heard it. Well, King Edward IV. died and left his two sons, Edward and Richard, under the protection of his own brother Richard, a very wicked prince, who instead of protecting and bringing up his two nephews, separated them from their mother and had them taken to the Tower under pretense of crowning them. But alas ! it was only to have them assassinated. The monster found a man as barbarous as himself, Tyrrell by name, who with three companions undertook to do this awful commission.

The oldest of the princes was fifteen years old, the youngest nine or ten, I don't just remember. A few hours before they died, the two brothers went into the chapel together and prayed, both kneeling on the same cushion. It was for the last time. O God ! It was just as if Marguerite and I should go to say our prayers together in the chapel of papa's château, and then, afterwards, just as we had fallen asleep, some one should come and smother us with the pillows of our beds.

¹ [Our little Frenchman seems to have got his knowledge of English history somewhat mixed up in this paragraph about Queen Elizabeth. And it is not quite clear whether he is speaking of a wax figure of the queen, which he may have seen at Madame Tussaud's, or of a picture of her in some room in the Tower. — ED.]

It is frightful! But that is how these two poor little princes were killed. Their bodies, which were hidden under the steps of a staircase, are now in Westminster Abbey.

I thought a long time over this sad story, but a great many other things claimed my attention, and at last I forgot it.

There are some magnificent parks in London. The principal are Hyde Park, Green Park, St. James' Park, and Regent's Park. Carriages can go in, so it is very nice to go if you have a carriage.

The Palace of St. James is the queen's palace, and it is very ugly when compared with the Tuileries; if I were the queen I wouldn't be satisfied to live in it.

Mr. Anderson told us everything, good and bad alike. He said that formerly there had been a hospital for lepers, where St. James' Palace now stands, but King Henry VIII., who didn't stick at anything, it seems, had it pulled down, and built a palace in place of the hospital.

St. James' Palace was the cause of my hearing the story of another little boy, but less frightful than the first.

After the death of Charles I. King of England, his children were in the Palace of St. James, guarded by soldiers, lest the people should take them away by force and crown them. They were playing at hide-and-seek; they had a little dog with long ears, and lucky it was that before they

began to play, they shut him up, for while they were playing, some friends came secretly and took away the second son, the Duke of York, to send him into France to his mother, and if the little dog had not been shut up, he would have betrayed them by barking at the strangers.

I saw the beautiful gardens of Kensington, where Queen Victoria passed her youth. There are some splendid trees there.

Catherine thinks that the Rue de la Paix is the finest street in the world, but she is wrong. She would be much astonished if she saw Regent Street, Oxford Street, and Piccadilly. The side-walks are as wide as an ordinary street.

Mr. Anderson laughed at my astonishment. He told me that there were nine thousand streets in London.

We went to Windsor Castle. But (no offense to Cyril) it isn't beautiful like Versailles and Saint-Cloud. We saw the queen and her children; they were walking on the grand terrace.

The Zoölogical Garden is splendid; and the animals seem very happy. They are kept in the sun or in the shade, as the case may require, to remind them as much as possible of the climate of their own country. Still, I think that those among them who love the sun, will not be foolish enough to believe they are still at home, for the sun of London is not much to talk about. Sometimes, in winter, it happens that one can't see at all even at mid-day; then they have to light up the street lamps.

I should like to be there when it happens so.

How many carriages there are in London ! It is worse than at Paris. They go very quickly and without getting mixed up together. The people on foot pass quickly about in the midst of them without troubling themselves about the noise and confusion around them. You mustn't think that in London the English have the calm and leisurely air of those of their countrymen whom we meet promenading in the Rue de la Paix. They walk very quickly, as we do in France, and seem to be very busy.

I am going to tell you of the docks, they are so curious. We all know that England is a commercial country, and that the English go all over the world looking for beautiful things. From the Indies they bring cashmeres and diamonds ; from China, tea and lacquered screens, and silk stuffs and drugs, and even the Chinese themselves sometimes. Vessels come to England laden with great riches. In former times, when the great merchant ships arrived from India, the Thames used to be covered with boats that came to transfer the merchandise from the ships to the warehouses of London. A great many precious things used to be lost or stolen in the transfer. At last the idea was taken up of building a sort of city of shops on the Thames. The ships now move up and down before the great warehouses and are unladen directly in front of them, and by this means losses and thefts are guarded against.

I was more than amused at the docks. I was proud to see articles of French manufacture and French merchandise among the others, and above all to recognize the brand of the Hermitage wines, and perhaps some of my uncle's making was among them, — who knows?

And now, you must hear of quite another thing. I have been under the Thames river, and that without an umbrella or a cap of oiled silk, and yet I didn't even get my feet damp! I defy even a fish to go under the Thames as well as I did. It is because there is a street under the Thames.

You know when you have been in a railway carriage, you have passed through narrow dark places that are called tunnels. These passages are hewn out of the rocks, or out of the mountains. Well, the tunnel of which I am telling you has been dug out under the Thames. I thought at first that I must look at it in the light of a curiosity, undertaken to amuse the English; but, on the contrary, this tunnel has its uses. A bridge could not have been built, raised sufficiently high in the air to allow the ships to pass under it, and it was absolutely necessary for the merchants that there should be some means of communication here. And so Mr. Brunel, a Frenchman, undertook to build this tunnel. There is a gallery or arcade on each side crowded with shops. Tea and coffee are sold down there, just as they are sold up above.

Richmond is three leagues — that is, nine miles — from London, on the banks of the Thames. It is a

charming place. Several rulers of England have died there — among others that wicked Elizabeth of whom I told you. A little beyond Richmond are the fine conservatories of Kew. One sees wonderful things at Kew. You go all the way up a spiral staircase and find yourself in a kind of kiosk, and from there you see below you trees higher than the houses, and rare plants from all countries. I thought of mamma, who is so fond of beautiful trees and flowers.

Mr. Anderson has a fine house at Richmond. He asked papa to go there for *lunch* at two o'clock. Lunch is a meal, and not a play, as I thought at first ; but I was amused while we were taking lunch, so it was all the same !¹

This meal is an important one among the English. It answers to our noonday breakfast, but it really merits the name of *dinner* — for everything that is proper for dinner is on the table, except the soup. But I think it is a very good idea of the English to suppress the soup at lunch, for they always have it bad. Mr. Anderson kept us with him three days. The fog didn't dare to appear before the natives of Dauphiny. The sky was clear all the time we stayed. O ! what walks we had in those beautiful gardens at Richmond ! I don't know of anything pleasanter than to wander about, even when you don't know where you are going ! I don't know why — but isn't it so ? Every day Cyril's friends

¹ [We must remember that a French boy is writing in *French* of English customs, most of which are new to him. — Ed.]

came at lunch time. At first they looked at me without saying anything; but when I asked them in English if they would like to play at croquet, I saw I astonished these little English gentlemen in speaking their language. Ah, how wrong it is not to apply one's self to study, and not to learn willingly! You see now that I wouldn't have enjoyed my visit to London half so much if I had not known English; and perhaps papa wouldn't even have thought of taking me with him.

Mr. Anderson's house is prettier than ours; but the ugly Thames passes in front of it, and there are no mountains—which proves the truth of what Catherine says, that we can't have everything in this world!

Among Mr. Anderson's servants, there were some yellow people. I am not jesting. They were what is called in England *native servants*, whom Mr. Anderson had brought from India. I was much surprised when I saw that they did not understand any English. Cyril explained to me that these people had a language of their own, called Hindostanee. Their masters have to learn it, because, on their part, they never succeed in learning more than half a dozen words of English.

In the evening, Cyril and I stayed for tea; and as papa talked with Mr. Anderson about the commerce that has grown up between England and India, I learned some interesting things; for Mr. Anderson, seeing that these matters interested me, took the trouble to explain to me what he said to

papa. I had also another reason for listening sharply. Cyril maintains that the English understand geography better than the French do. I sustained the contrary without knowing whether it was true or not ; but as papa said that Cyril was right, I decided to learn geography well, and as there was a large map of India in the *salon*, I resolved to commence with that.

Cyril seemed well satisfied when I asked him to teach me about India, for he has all that at his fingers' ends, and talks already of the voyages he shall make by and by. Fancy us two friends leaning over the map, and Cyril showing me the two great peninsulas of southern Asia, separated by the Bay of Bengal. The first of these peninsulas is called Hindostan. And it is there especially that the English have established a traffic.

Cyril tried to be as eloquent as he could in his explanations, but I own to you that I wasn't interested in them. But I didn't say so ; indeed I showed myself very attentive when he pointed out at the north the Himalaya Mountains, the highest in the world. Cyril didn't forget to tell me that, for he has taken my Mountains in Dauphiny seriously to heart. To the northeast are the Garrow Mountains, to the northwest the Hindoo Koosh, and to the west the chain of the Ghauts. Then the rivers — the Ganges, and the Indus, and many others that I don't remember about.

If M. Hersant had given me a lesson in geography while we were travelling, I probably should

not have listened to him ; but I gave all my attention to the explanations of my friend !

I have often noticed that it is quite enough for a person to insist upon my doing a thing to make me refuse to apply myself to it. It seems to me that it ought not to be so — indeed I'm sure it ought not.

The cities I found more interesting. Calcutta is the capital of all English Hindostan. I was well enough satisfied to know that, as I suppose you will also be ; but Cyril, who has been hearing about Calcutta ever since he has been in the world, didn't lose the occasion for showing off his knowledge — and after all I have no spite against him for telling me that Calcutta is a large and fine city built on the shore of the river Hoogly. What I don't like is, that the town is divided into two sections — one for the poor people, which is called Black-town, and where one sees only the huts of the miserable, while the other section, White-town, is splendid. It has magnificent quays, and fine houses, and a palace for the governor.

Cyril described for me Fort William, where there are a great many cannon. We came very near broaching a new subject of dispute here, because I maintained that Fort William wasn't as fine a fort as that at Grenoble. But I gave up, however, for the reason that being in my friend's house, it would have been altogether wrong to fight him in defense of the citadel of Grenoble, which will know very well how to defend itself if the English should attack it.

At last we got out of Cyril's everlasting Calcutta, and went, always following the tip of his finger, to Bengal, to Madras, to Agra, to Surat, to Bombay and to Cashmere or Kashmir.

Cyril told me, just like a real little East Indian merchant, all about what these cities furnish, too, to the commerce of England, — sugar, rice, tobacco, silk, cotton, etc.

Knowing my taste for animals, he told me about the elephants, the lions, the panthers, the crocodiles, and the serpents of India. Then we went up into a room where we found a large number of stuffed birds. There were little ones and big ones. Some had green wings and red heads; and others were blue and black; and others still, yellow like gold. What a splendid sight it must have been when all these beautiful birds spread their wings and fluttered in the air! Cyril, charmed by the interest with which I listened to him, continued: —

“ Henri, there are in India forests of trees that have a delicious odor; they are called sandal-trees.”

Said I, “ I know that Marguerite has a fan of sandal-wood.”

“ Yes,” said Cyril, “ and there are cocoa-nut trees and bamboos, and mines of gold and silver, and diamonds, and rubies, and pearls, and amethysts.”

Cyril talked of all these riches as if they had belonged to his papa, and this piqued me a little; and remembering all at once the conversation of the evening before, I said to my friend, —

“ You forget to mention the *cholera*, of which

your father told us last night." It was rude of me, wasn't it? I felt that it was so a little while afterwards, and I changed the conversation by saying, —

"Cyril, tell me about Cashmere. If Marguerite were in India, she would be sure to want to see the city where they make such beautiful shawls."

Cyril smiled, and told me that the finest shawls in the world were made in Cashmere, and that about sixty thousand were made there every year. The wool used is that of the goats who live on Mount Thibet, which we had seen on the map to the north of the Valley of Cashmere. If my learned little friend is to be believed, these goats only enjoy good health on high places. They have great need of air, and they die in the plains.

Cyril gave me some attar of roses for mamma and Marguerite, in a pretty little flat bottle.

Mr. Anderson's house is full of curious things. The black and gold screens in the *salon* came from Cashmere.

Now you are going to be surprised, and I hope pleased. Mr. Anderson sent for us to go into his library, where he was with papa. It was to give me a pretty little cane of bamboo which he had brought from India, and a Bombay coffer in pearl and precious woods, for Marguerite. I opened it, and inside there was a necklace of amethysts.

I thought that was all, but it wasn't. Mr. Anderson opened a large chest and took from it different Cashmere shawls of all colors, and said, —

"I beg that my dear Henri, Cyril's friend, will

choose a shawl for his mamma." Papa remonstrated politely. As for me, I lost no time in useless ceremonies, but at once picked out a lovely blue one, because my little mother loves blue. I was so happy I didn't think at all about my cane.

The same day after lunch we returned to London. Mr. Anderson went up to London with us. It was very courteous of him.

The time passes as quickly in England as it does in France, and I was greatly astonished to hear papa say the next day, —

"My little Henri, we will go and see Cyril once more, and then we must hurry back to Paris, where we are expected so impatiently."

I was sorry and glad at the same time. We had, besides the needles for Marguerite, to choose a present for her. The choice of it was left to me. After much hesitation I decided upon one of those handsome wax dolls, that have blonde complexions and high-colored cheeks and yellow hair—that is to say an altogether English look and air.

Papa laughed at my perplexity. At first I thought I wanted a blonde one, then a brunette, now a large one and now a little one, and then I came near choosing a *baby* doll. I wanted them all! but my choice must be limited to one. We had decided that immediately after breakfast we would go and buy that famous English-looking doll which I had at last fixed upon, when the servant came to say that there was a poor man outside who insisted on speaking with papa.

"It is the fourth time he has been here; and I couldn't get rid of him this time," said the servant.

"Let him come in at once," said papa, in a tone of reproach.

The man came in. He was cleanly dressed, though he seemed very poor. He was neither very young nor very old, but if he had been happy he would have looked young.

"Pardon, sir," he said; "you are French, and so am I. For four days I have had the pleasure of seeing you pass my window. I have even followed you as far as Green Park to ask your protection. I wanted to speak to you — to ask a service of you."

"You have done right, my friend," said papa, with so kind a manner that the poor man was no longer afraid. "Sit down," added papa, "and tell me your story."

The man replied, "My story is a very simple one sir. My name is Pierre Leroy. I am from Châlon-sur-Saône — a fine country, sir! I am a shoemaker. I married an honest young girl, and for two years we were happy. Then work became scarce, and at last was not to be had at all. It is six years since then, sir. Some one gave us bad advice — 'Go to London,' was said to us. 'In London there is gold and silver enough to cover all the shoemakers' leather.' We believed it. We sold our little place, paid all our debts, and we came here with our two-year-old child and a purse that was light to carry.

"I had a letter of recommendation that had been given me by a hotel servant in Paris. I made him a pair of shoes in return. They were worth more than the letter was to me, for I was badly enough received. At the end of two days Marianne and I saw that we had done wrong to come. But no matter, sir; when a man has a wife and child he can only say, 'I must earn their living.' By incessant search I made the acquaintance of some French workmen. They were kind to me, and, thanks to them, I got work. Unfortunately, I could not make as much as we needed to spend. In a village one lives almost on the air and the sunshine; and here, by working from morning till night, and going long miles to take the work home, I hardly earned enough to pay for a miserable room in Marylebone, and procure insufficient food for my wife and our child.

"Ah, dear sir! at least in our country we have bread, and good bread at that! Here in London the bread of the rich isn't much better than that of the poor. In our country the workman munches his white bread gayly, and manages to get through his troubles. Marianne, that dear and gentle woman, found that she could not live on potatoes — nothing but potatoes, poor little thing! She used to be so fresh and pretty; but ah, sir, she soon grew pale and thin, her chest began to trouble her, and at the end of a year I had no wife."

Pierre Leroy stopped a moment. He was trying not to cry.

"Poor man!" said papa. "And what can I do to help you? I have a friend here. Shall I speak to him for you? Because we are going away."

"No, sir," he replied; "that is not what I want. I will tell you all, and then you can see what you can do. Since the death of my wife I have had but one idea. When I lie down to sleep, and when I get up, I see my native village, the sweet blue river Rhone, and the sun shining on all, and I say, 'O God of the poor! let me go back to my own land.'"

"Yes, sir! for six years I have prayed this prayer constantly. I make enough by my work to pay for my lodging and for my food for myself and my child; but, sir, I shall never—I see it now—no, I shall never be able to save money enough to take me back to my home. And I don't know any people except workmen like myself. But when I saw you pass with your little boy, somehow hope came to me. I tried to put it away, but I couldn't; I kept hoping on more than ever!"

"You were right to hope, my friend. Perhaps I can get a free passage back for you and your child."

"Ah!" said Pierre Leroy,— "ah! God of heaven! wasn't I right to trust in your kindness, sir? Do you see how it was? The look of your face somehow went right to my heart, and then in looking at this little gentleman, I thought, 'He has such a gentle expression, his papa must be good!'"

"How old is your child, my worthy man," said papa.

"My little Marie is eight years old, sir! Ah! if you could see her, poor angel! I have brought her up the best I could. Many and many a time I have held her in my arms to warm her. She is useful to me already. She can make her bed, sweep and set the room in order. She never complains. Once only, once she cried, because we had nothing but cold potatoes to eat. But still you mustn't think that there is no charity in this country. No, no; the poor have good friends here. I know — I who tell you these things, — I know ladies who might be riding in their carriages in Hyde Park, or sitting in their splendid homes, and instead of that, they are always going about in the Strand, and in all the crowded parts of the city, to find out and solace as much of the sorrows of poor people as they can. Some of these ladies took care of me once when I was sick, and I can well say that but for them I should have died. And when my little Marie had the scarlet fever, why I could have had six nurses for her. The child was never left alone, and some of the ladies were with her the whole day."

"Well, now," said papa, "there is the rest of our breakfast; take it away with you, and come back at four o'clock to hear what I have been able to do for you."

"Ah, sir!" — but here Pierre Leroy broke down, and went away hiding his face in an old pocket-handkerchief.

After he had gone, I overwhelmed papa with questions as to the means he should employ to obtain the poor man's passage.

"I did not think of it when I spoke, but I haven't time to attend to getting him a free passage," said papa, and I have in my purse but just enough to take us to Paris. There is, however, one thing that we can do."

"O yes, papa! Do have a lucky idea about it," cried I, joyfully; "for I like Pierre Leroy and his little girl already."

"And," said papa, looking at me, "if this lucky idea of mine should impose some privation upon you, would you still think it a lucky idea?"

I said, "Yes, but I don't see how that could be."

"Well, Henri, there is Marguerite's doll."

"Marguerite's doll!" I cried out. "O papa! that is impossible! Ask Mr. Anderson to lend you the money, or write home for it; we can very well wait a little longer."

I was choking with grief at the thought of sacrificing my sister's present. Pierre Leroy became all at once a wicked man, who had only come to take away from me a gratification which I prized above all others. Forgive me, dear reader, but I couldn't help thinking that if papa really had a kind heart, he would not mind putting himself to a little trouble. I thought myself much better than he was.

Happily I didn't keep all these bad thoughts to myself. I told my father all that was in my mind betwixt sobs and tears (it was the first time that I had cried since we had been in England).

"Now let us look at this matter, Henri," said papa, without getting impatient with me. "Although Mr. Anderson has treated me like a friend, I am really only a simple acquaintance of his ; and absolutely I cannot borrow money of a man who has overwhelmed us with attentions and presents. I could delay our departure, but only on the condition of giving pain to your mother and sister. If I promise Pierre to send him the money which he needs in order to quit London, the poor man will fear that we will forget him and neglect to do it, he being a stranger to us ; and the joy which you have seen him display will be changed into disappointment. Isn't it more generous and more reasonable to sacrifice Marguerite's doll? Ah! I know how your little sister would decide if she were in your place, and very quickly, too."

"Yes," I said, "that is true ; but I won't have the pleasure of giving my sister a pleasant surprise." I didn't wait for an answer. I lowered my eyes, and added quickly, "Give the money to Pierre Leroy."

"You are a brave boy," said papa. "You shall tell the good news to Pierre yourself."

This hope brightened me up a little ; but at the bottom I was inconsolable at not having all at once decided in favor of a certain blue-eyed and fair-haired waxen "baby," which it seemed to me I saw always before me.

Papa took me with him when he went out to get information about Pierre Leroy. We went at first

to the place where he had first lodged, in Marylebone, and then into the Strand. The neighbors all agreed in speaking well of Pierre ; a policeman of that section of the city gave us the best possible account of him.

O ! you mustn't think that I was hoping to hear anything bad about him ; I am not so wicked as all that comes to. On the contrary, I felt my vexation little by little melting away. I should like to know if you, my reader, are like me. I am good and bad at the same time. I want to be good and yet I don't want to. It is just as if there were two little boys in me. But when I am the *good boy* I am happy.

We had hardly got back to our hotel, when Pierre Leroy came in with his little girl. Poor man ! he seemed to be quite as proud of her as papa is of Marguerite. And yet this little girl was not pretty. She was badly dressed, but very clean. One thing in her attire struck me especially ; she had on new shoes. She saluted us very politely, and when papa said to her, " Would you like to go to France ? " for her answer she threw herself on her father's neck.

" Very well, my friend," said papa to Pierre ; " get yourself ready ; my little boy will pay for your passage."

At these words all the dolls in London vanished away, and I felt something as I did long before when mamma spoke to me about "*my honor*." Don't you remember it ? Now all at once it

seemed to me that I was a rich and powerful man, good and generous, and I wanted to take the steamer at once with Pierre Leroy and his little girl, and make them happy by carrying them back with me to France.

Papa gave Pierre a crown to buy a shawl for his little girl, for the weather was beginning to be cool, and the poor child was thinly dressed. He advised him to come the next morning at nine o'clock, to go on board with us at a quarter before ten.

The worthy man was prompt, as you may well believe. He came at the hour named, with Marie, and a very little bundle, whose appearance told the whole story of the misery of these poor travellers. Papa ordered a good breakfast for them, and soon we were on our way to the railway station.

When I am happy, I leap, I sing, I dance. I know a man acts differently from what a child does ; still, I could not help watching Pierre Leroy, to see how he would bear his happiness. I expected that he would in some way show his joy. But no ! he was pale and tremulous, and seemed to me to be sadder than ever. His little girl was frightened. She hid herself in her father's arms. They did not move during our passage across. I told papa how astonished I was. He said that a great joy often hid itself under an appearance of sadness. From which I concluded that there must be different kinds of happiness, and that I should make the acquaintance of all of them little by little.

All the waves of the sea were smoothed down ;

it was like a great river. And so everybody, nearly, was in a good humor. People read and conversed, and the ladies worked at their embroidery. I always have marbles in my pocket, and I profited by this calm surface to play a game on the level deck.

I took care of my protégé, the little girl. As she didn't seem to be very sad, I brought her some bread and butter, and at last her father began to look happy. When we came in sight of Boulogne, I think he must have lost his head for awhile. When we had left the steamer, papa gave him some extra money to pay his way to Paris, at the same time telling him to come and see us at our hotel.

"O!" said he, "it is too much, sir! it is too much kindness."

But all the time that he was trying to refuse, his face and figure said plainly enough, —

"You are right, sir. Without you I don't know what I should have done. I should be quite at a loss but for you."



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CHAPTER XXVII.

OUR IMPORTANCE AS TRAVELLERS.

THE journey from Boulogne to Paris seemed to me even longer this time than it had been the first. It was because I was going back to mamma and Marguerite. And yet, as we neared Paris my happiness was mingled with disappointment. I thought I had been fully consoled for not having been able to bring my sister her doll, but as soon as I saw Pierre Leroy safely landed in France all my regret returned. I began again to accuse papa! I was still a bad boy, as you see. Ah! but after all how pleasant it was to find myself returned from England, and to find my mother and my sister at the station, to embrace them and be in turn embraced by them. It was, perhaps, the best part of the excursion.

Papa really hadn't too much money. He was obliged to tell Pierre Leroy to come to the hotel to get the rest of what had been promised him to pay his fare to Châlons. Mamma asked me who that man was. I told her the whole story, except

the part about the doll. We were at table when Pierre came with his little girl. Mamma wanted to give them some dinner. But there was not time ; Catherine had hardly a minute in which to look for some old clothes of Marguerite's for Marie, and give them to Pierre, who departed blessing and thanking us all.

“How good it was of you, Georges,” said mamma, “to bring back that worthy workman. I always like to see a good action adding to the pleasure of an excursion.” Marguerite was very gay ; she looked at me and laughed all the time. Miss Arabella opened her large eyes, and did not tire of listening to our accounts of what we had seen. I believe that my admiration for England gave me a warmer place in her heart than I had ever had there before.

I gave my journal to my sister, but it was so hastily scribbled over that she begged me to tell her myself all about our trip. My account of it was not very long, for mamma soon sent us to bed.

I fell asleep at once, and dreamed in English ; but I am not ready yet to dream in Greek !

Catherine received me as one who had been miraculously returned to her alive, after going through great dangers. She overwhelmed me with questions to assure herself of the soundness of my health, and seemed almost sorry that none of her gloomy presentiments had been fulfilled. I presented her with some English pins and needles ; and in spite of the grudge that she had towards England, she received my presents with a smile.

At breakfast next day we had a delightful time. Papa told about all our visits. From time to time I put in a word — a thing that had never before been permitted to me. This concession, small as it was, made me understand my added importance as a traveller.

My nurse brought in Mr. Anderson's presents. Mamma admired the shawl, though without being as much enchanted with it, as I had expected she would be. She tried it on to please papa. As for Marguerite, she required to have her necklace clasped at once about her neck. And then she began to fill her pretty box with all her most precious things.

I meant not to have told my sister the story of the doll. But I found myself telling it to her, after all! I know why. It is because I love my sister so well that I tell her everything.

We were in the Tuileries gardens. "Marguerite," said I, "I am going to tell you something that will surprise and perhaps pain you."

Marguerite said, "O, you can't be sure of that yet, Riri."

"You wanted an English doll, didn't you?" I said.

She answered readily, "O yes, brother!"

"And you thought I would bring you a pretty one, didn't you?" I continued.

"Yes; but that will be for another time," she answered.

"Well," I said, "it isn't my fault that I didn't,

and I have cried enough about it, I can tell you. And yet, when I say it wasn't my fault I am wrong. If I had decided at once on a pretty baby-doll that I saw, and that could open its eyes and its mouth, and put its tongue out a little, all this wouldn't have happened."

"It could put its tongue out?" said Marguerite, deeply interested.

"Yes, sister!" I replied, equally as much moved.

"O Henri!" cried Marguerite reproachfully, "what have you done?"

I said, "Papa had hardly enough money to come home with, and Pierre Leroy wanted to come too. Then papa told me that we couldn't pay Pierre Leroy's passage and buy the doll as well. Marguerite, I believe papa wanted me to make a sacrifice; but it wasn't just, because I am too little!"

"O!" said Marguerite, "don't say that, brother, it is bad! Papa never deceives us. I confess to you that '*a baby*' that could open and shut its eyes, and above all put out its tongue, would have made me crazy with joy; but I won't think about it. I will think of Pierre Leroy and his little girl. And you must think about them too, and then we shall both be content."

"Sister!" I said. "Yes, brother." "I think," said I, deliberately, "that little girls are better than little boys — don't you?"

"O! I don't know, brother! We will ask mamma."

And without saying anything more, we kissed each other.



"We kissed each other." Page 285.

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A gentleman saw us, and said, "O what amiable little children!"

I think as that gentleman did — that we are amiable because we love each other; and in spite of the little misunderstandings, of which the reader knows, we have never had any of those ugly disputes which make parents of some children so unhappy.

We never said anything more about that doll — not even on the day when Marguerite, as if by chance, received a present of one just like it. It was very clear, though, that mamma had heard all about it.

To our departure from Paris Catherine made not the least objection, and I think you will not be surprised to hear that it didn't cost Marguerite and me anything to leave either.

We like Dauphiny better than any other place, and it is there that we are most beloved. Two children less at Paris was no great calamity, even to the gentleman who thought us so amiable. At Saint-Jean it is quite another thing; and I was not proud or conceited in thinking that everybody there would be glad to have us back again.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

So behold us again in Dauphiny. Decidedly, I liked the coming back much better than the going away!

I wasn't mistaken. Our farm people and our servants received us as if we had been gone a year. I don't know whether it was the effect of my imagination merely, but even the grapes themselves seemed not to be sorry at the prospect that they were to be gathered and eaten by us. I don't think I could have been happier to see again our mountains, our terrace, and our animals, if I had but just arrived from Calcutta with Cyril. Our dog barked and jumped about us, and licked our hands. Poor friend! He and we have had many a good game together, and he has never bitten us yet.

M. Hersant told me that the time had seemed very long to him. I didn't believe it; because I had found the time very short, and it ought to have been the same with M. Hersant. I was expecting

to take up my studies again, and I thought it but just that I should do so. Therefore I was much astonished to find that our vacation was prolonged. Every day we made some new excursion.

The times when papa used to take me up before him on his horse were gone. I had a pony of my own now. I could ride very well, and we went out every day. I am obliged to confess that this exercise, so salutary to my health, was not so for my modesty. I felt greatly elated by my own importance when we would turn aside into the courtyard of a chateau, and every one saw me come galloping up alongside of my father.

The people whom we met on foot excited my pity almost as much as did my dear little brother making believe to ride on horseback astride of a stick. In the mean time I hope that you will have no trouble in believing that I was good to that little brother. I took pleasure in playing with him, although I could no longer understand how he could take pleasure in games which I had long since regarded with disdain. I could have wished that he had been older so that we could have studied together, for with the exception of a few lessons taken with Marguerite, her studies were no longer the same as mine.

Everybody was frightened at the way in which I grew up, so large and tall for my age. And such a great stout boy as I was becoming, it seemed absurd of Catherine to pet and spoil me as she still did, in spite of all M. Hersant could do. I felt

myself that it was absurd of me to allow myself to be still treated with such indulgence, but I hadn't the courage to sacrifice my pleasures to my sense of what was right ; sometimes I felt so ashamed that I would resist Catherine's ill-judged kindness.

If Marguerite and I loved the spring in the country, we loved the autumn no less. Then we could run among the vines, and go after chest nuts, and into the orchard, and profit by "the last fine days," as mamma said, to make excursions into the mountains, gathering flowers, and botanizing, and come back — I with a torn blouse most frequently — and tell of the effects of sun or frost which we had seen on our way. And then it was so pleasant to play the courageous before my little sister, just as if I were a real man, and say carelessly, "I jumped across a great deep hole, and if I had not caught at the branch of a tree I should certainly have fallen into it."

What ! Have I forgotten to mention my acquisition of that to which I had aspired since I was five years old ? At last I got my boots ! How proud I was, after I got them, to go out with papa, stepping along bravely at his side, trying very hard to make my step as long as his, and every now and then glancing down exultingly at my boots ! And then to ask papa confidentially all manner of questions about whatever came into my head. I was very happy, and I thought that it would always be so ; but perhaps you have already remarked that disappointment comes at the very moment when

we are least expecting it. And ah ! dear reader, if you love me a little, as I hope you do, you will be sorry for me when you hear of mine.

Our friends and neighbors took advantage of the fine weather to come and see us. Hardly a day passed that a carriage did not stop before the front porch, and almost always I would see some of my little friends leaning eagerly out of the window. I don't know of anything more delicious, than just when you are boring your brains over a difficult composition, to hear the sound of carriage wheels coming up to the house ! It is just as if some one came and whispered in your ear, " My friend, something is going to happen to break in upon the monotonous routine of duty. Perhaps some little boys have come and you'll have to do the honors for them. At any rate visitors are here, and the dinner will be better than usual, and you will be at liberty to eat a little of everything, and there's hope of a game at base afterwards."

You see I am no hypocrite, yet you mustn't believe that I think my faults are pretty ones. No ! I mean to correct them in time !

Our old doctor has a proverb which I put in practice when it suits me : "*Slow goes sure.*" And yet that good doctor (he has a great deal of experience) once said to mamma, that children with good appetites are always healthy. As I was there and heard him, mamma began to talk at length about indigestions. But I don't want to think I

am worse than I am, for I never had an indigestion in my life, and I should be much ashamed of being sick from the effects of over-greediness.

You can easily imagine for yourself what my life was at this time, horseback rides, four-in-hand rides, excursions into the mountains on foot or donkey-back with other boys, games at ball, balloons, whips, which were forever needing new crackers on them, lunches prepared by Catherine, cries of joy, running, leaping, tearing about everywhere, and not a drop of rain to damp our perfect contentment; which however, did not prevent all our fine projects for further amusement from falling into the water, one fine day.

For one morning at breakfast papa got a big letter, an extraordinary looking letter, with a pompous great seal on it, and all sorts of inscriptions on the outside. The Minister of War had written to him to rejoin his regiment. Mamma was almost distracted, for papa had expected to stay with us for six months more. Marguerite and I were sent away as soon as we had finished our breakfast. M. Hersant and Miss Arabella discreetly followed us, so as to leave papa and mamma at liberty to talk together.

I so wanted to know what they were talking about, and yet it is wrong to be inquisitive. In the first place it is an ugly fault; and then, you know, bad news always comes soon enough without being sought for. Thanks to my good conduct (for I had corrected myself of the bad habit of

listening), I calculated on at least fifteen days more of fine weather and freedom, when see what took place one day about half-way up the mountain, in a shady nook where we were in the habit of taking our breakfast. Papa said to me, —

“My dear child, in a few weeks from now I must rejoin my regiment at Constantine. I am well satisfied with your conduct, but still I think it will be best to send you to college. You have reached the age when it is well for a boy to be with other boys, and when he should ‘mix with men,’ as the saying is. We shall all go to Lyons, where I have business, and then in a few days you must go to college. I count upon your good sense not to show too much disappointment before your mother. You know how she loves you; don’t make the parting any harder for her than you can help.”

At these words I gave free way to my tears.

“I went to college,” said my good father, “when I was like you; Nono and Paul entered last year. All men go to college.”

“*All men!*” That last consideration revived my courage. I looked at myself, at my boots, and at my cane, and thought of Paul and Nono; and papa having promised to place me in the same college with them, I am obliged to confess that my chagrin disappeared like a great black cloud which frightens us in the morning but melts away at noonday.

It is pleasant to think that sorrow can be chased

away so easily. It will come back; still there is always some means of consolation.

The rest of our walk was taken up by questions from me, to which papa responded with even more than his usual complaisance.

In the mean while, although I kept saying to myself that I was going to mix with men, I saw what sweet and pleasant things I must leave behind me — my mamma and my darling sister, and last, Catherine, with her cup of chocolate for me every morning.

Will you believe it, I was also sorry to leave M. Hersant. He had been so good to us during our little sicknesses; he had such a pretty collection of butterflies; he knew the names of all the plants on the mountain; and it was to his suggestions that I owed the purchase of my pony for me by papa.

These are the things I was thinking about while I talked with papa. My head was full of ideas, and I passed from one thing to another.

When we got home again, I ran to mamma's room, and she embraced me in a way that said, "You know it all now, my darling," and as for me, I cried again for a little while.

Marguerite acted very differently from what I had expected of her. She was unusually cheerful, and only talked of the holidays I should have and the excursions we should make on those days, and of the pleasure of returning to the country for the vacations.

It did not seem natural in her. I always shall believe that mamma had taught her the part she was to act beforehand, and that she, gentle and obedient as she always is, only repeated what mamma had told her to say to me, but not a word of the pain that was in her little heart.

Paul and Noel came to see me just in time to fortify my good resolutions. I had not seen them for a year. They were no longer the same little boys whom I had known, dressed in fashionable blouses or jackets. They wore the uniform of their college. At the sight of their buttons and their military caps, I felt my courage revive, and without losing a moment I took them out into the main avenue of the park to tell them the news.

"O how jolly that will be!" cried Nono, jumping over a bench; "we have fine times at college. We get up to the sound of the drum, we breakfast and dine to the sound of the drum. We march in ranks, and make a noise with our feet; we play and we wrestle with each other!" And Nono made all the echoes wake up with his cheers.

"And you can see your mamma in the parlor, and go out for a holiday; and at the end of the year you get a prize," said his brother.

Yet, in spite of Paul's encouraging discourses, I, who had always wanted Time to fly, would have been glad enough to have him creep now; but he didn't slack his pace for anybody, and the day of papa's departure arrived quickly and like any other day, in spite of all our regrets. "God keep

him!" said our farm-people and our servants. As for Catherine, she never stopped the flow of her abuse against war and cannons and the Bedouins. "What an idea it was, that of going back to Africa," she said, "and we had all been so happy and so peaceful together!"

We didn't cry any more, Marguerite and I, for we were to go to Lyons with papa. Mamma, who gets so pale when any of us fall sick, and who worries herself about Xavier's slightest illness, looked now just as she usually did, which, however, was not a sign that she did not suffer.

I am not childish enough to feel interested in telling you about the incidents of our journey; besides, it is always the same thing—one journey is like another. So here we are at Lyons! It is fine weather, we see the boats go by, and there are yet plenty of flowers in the gardens. Only the trees have no more leaves, excepting ugly old yellow ones. In Dauphiny, the leaves in autumn are of all colors and that is much prettier. And then the flowers—but let it pass; I don't want to make myself sad.

We hardly saw papa at all; he was out all day with mamma. I would have been glad to know exactly what day papa was to leave, but nobody could or would answer this question.

One last pleasure was reserved for me—that of seeing papa in full uniform at the general review. He passed and repassed at full gallop. O, I wished then that I could be grown up all at

once, and have a sabre and epaulets and give the word of command to my soldiers. I was almost ashamed to find myself still a forced retainer in the *infantry* service.

You must not forget that my enthusiasm for a soldier's trade had always been naturally great. I have my reasons for asking you to remember it.

Papa wasn't afraid to go to the wars. My questions about battles pleased him; and although I was getting a little too old for it, I got out my leaden soldiers and ranged them in line, and papa maneuvered them for me. A flourish of trumpets heard from without at that moment, completed my warlike illusion.

From the battle-field, let us return to the college. Of all the arguments which papa brought forward as to the necessity of good behavior on my part, the strongest with me was the idea of pleasing mamma, and yet again, the thought that my good marks would go all the way to Africa. You won't be surprised at that. You know the happiness which good conduct brings with it, and I tell you this in confidence, only that I may a little merit your affection; yes, I want you to love me; I want your indulgence; and if the confessions that I have made of my thoughtlessness and badness will help you to correct any of your own bad habits, then, dear reader, I am fully repaid for the humiliation of having made them.

"Children," said mamma, "your father is going away to-night."

At these words we began to cry. Catherine came and took us out to walk, and so we did not cry any more then. That evening we all went with papa to the Lyons railway station. Nobody spoke. The carriage stopped at the station; we got out. All was bustle and confusion. "Take care! take care of your legs, my little master!" The trunks were taken off. The last bell rang. We were allowed to go inside of the railings near the train. Papa embraced us just as he always did, but for all that I felt his heart beat when he took me again, for the last time, into his arms, and then his eyes were so sad. And poor mamma! she put down her veil, but everybody saw the great tears falling from her eyes. But no one spoke — we only looked at her sadly. We stayed where we were until the last moment. At last the train moved out and carried away with it the dearest and best of papas.

Marguerite said to me as we walked back to the carriage, "Brother, don't speak to mamma just now. We will try to console her by and by."

It was just the contrary of what I wanted to do. It seemed to me most natural to go and embrace my darling little mother and try to comfort her, when I saw her crying. In the mean time, as my sister is a year older than I, — and I am sometimes tempted to believe she is ten years older, — I followed her counsel. We were silent all the way home. And then at last, when we were once more home, mamma embraced us tenderly, so tenderly that we felt that we were her sole and great consolation now.

My enthusiasm for military glory fell at once from my heart. I set myself to thinking how all these absences of papa pained both him and us, and then I was startled by a thought which had not come to me until now, — that he might sometime go away and never return. The fall of two of my leaden cavaliers — overturned on the field of battle by the blow of a sword — was the cause of this new idea entering my head. Marguerite found me standing in the middle of the room with my arms folded. She said, —

“What are you thinking about, Henri?”

Said I, “I don’t want any more to be a soldier. There is too much grief and too many partings when one is a soldier.”

Marguerite said at once, “You are right, Riri. As for me, I don’t like war. Having a fine uniform isn’t all of it. One must fight, and kill, and be killed. And then papa, who is so good — But brother, if you won’t be a soldier, what will you be?”

“I will be a scholar. Then one lives more quietly. I shall stay in my library; I shall have my books, my maps, my globes, and cases of insects and stuffed animals; and instead of a uniform a fine dressing-gown, and slippers, which you will embroider for me.”

Marguerite received my new project with transports of joy, for she had never shared in my military enthusiasm, although she had often sounded “a retreat.”

I still had some few days of freedom left before

entering college. Perhaps you will think I was very sad. Wrong! A great change was taking place in me. I no longer thought only of myself from morning till night; I was full of attentions for mamma. I anticipated all her wishes, and I had the joy of seeing that her little Henri could console her.

Any one who has read my memoirs so far, will at least believe that I am an honest boy, and that the truth is always at the point of my pen. And truly, indeed, I have a horror of falsehood! Well, here is something for you, hard to believe. I took the resolution to become a remarkable scholar, to be the first in everything, to win as many prizes as possible, to be good to my comrades, to be perfect. Yes, that was what I resolved on. These thoughts gave me courage and much happiness. I was in a hurry to get into my college uniform, to be upon my bench at school, to arrange my desk, to be writing my themes, and studying away as if for dear life — to be the first in all!

Ah! if I could have shown the good thoughts that were in my heart and the joy they brought me to certain little boys of my acquaintance, I think they would soon have been cured of their laziness!

The night before my departure I showed only one single weakness. I could not say good-by to my leaden soldiers without emotion. Marguerite noticed it, and she promised me to keep them well burnished and to range them sometimes on the battlefield so that they should not lose their warlike habits.

I had resolved that I would not cry when the time came to go so I began to sing. I got along very well, so that night, in embracing my darling little mother, I said, "Let us have courage!" But instead of consoling her, I only caused her tears to overflow.

It was the 14th of October, 18—. It was splendid weather, only a little cold. The chestnut sellers had already taken up their stands at the street corners. At two o'clock I went into college. I found Paul and Noel in the parlor. They clapped their hands when they saw me. As I couldn't sing to sustain my courage in that solemn place, I was delighted to find my friends there. The great lump that had been forcing itself up into my throat and choking me melted away—at last it was all over. Without losing a moment, Nono took some marbles out of his pocket, saying, "Look here at my marbles!" I promptly followed him up by also producing some marbles from my pocket, which at once attracted Paul's attention.

The drum was heard to beat. I threw a hasty kiss with my fingers to my mother and sister,—I did not dare to do more for fear of breaking down,—and disappeared with my friends. You must not expect to find in these memoirs an account of my life at college. It would be too great an undertaking, for there is the Greek and the Latin; and I only want to tell you, for your own consolation as well as my own, that I at once showed myself determined to give my teachers full satisfaction. Idleness and

dissipation did not pass me by without whispering temptations in my ear ; but I sent them packing, and I shut my eyes to the fooleries of my schoolmates. I followed the example of my dear Paul. I have gained my place on the roll of honor, and I count on taking up my quarters on it, to use a military expression.

I play with Nono. And when mamma and Marguerite come to see me, I answer the summons to the parlor with a face radiant with happiness. I am allowed, as a recompense for good conduct, to have extra holidays, and then I go out to walk and to play with my sister, and we revisit together whatever has pleased us best in the past. I am happy, and I hope the reader is as much so as I am. If not, if he will only try my method I think he will meet with my success in time.

I have not done yet, as you may have thought. I want to tell you of one of my pleasant surprises, the remembrance of which will always stay with me.

One Thursday (that's our parlor-day) mamma brought me — guess what ! Cakes ? No ! A balloon ? Not that, either. Ah, dear reader, I wasn't expecting it, but mamma did really bring me *a letter from papa* ! Yes, a letter from papa, addressed to my own self, and under an envelope too at that ! and *sealed*, yes, really sealed with red wax, and post-marked "Constantine !" A letter all for me, all to myself, from papa ! I had a moment of stupefaction, then of wild joy. The letter — I have read



"Mamma brought me — guess what?" Page 300.

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it perhaps fifty times — is in my green portfolio. I am going to look for it and copy it for you.

“CONSTANTINE, *November 14, 18 —.*

“MY DEAR HENRI, — So now you are at college ! You have taken up studies which will become more and more serious every day. That is not all, my dear child ; you are surrounded by companions, among whom you must learn how to live rightly. They have their virtues and their faults ; it is for you to notice and discriminate as to what takes place around you, to choose the right path, and walk resolutely in it.

“Until now you have been with your excellent mother and your gentle sister ; then all was easy and agreeable. Now you have to think for yourself ; obey your conscience it will never deceive you.

“You have told me of the two boys that are in you, the good boy and the bad boy. They will both get bigger as you get bigger. That is to say, that you will always have to carry on an internal combat between your good and your bad inclinations ; and according as you follow the one or the other you will become an estimable young man, well educated, loving your duty, and making our chief happiness, or you will become our great sorrow in life. You will have to be told of your faults sometimes ; don't shut your ears then, my little Henri. A lesson given by a comrade is precious. You musn't expect to find, even in the best

and kindest masters, the tenderness and indulgence which you have met with from your mother and myself; but make it one of your first duties to respect your teachers. Be always truthful and obedient. Don't forget that you have always had set before you at home a high standard of courtesy towards others. Perhaps, my dear little son, you may sometimes have to endure injustice; you will not always be rendered good in return for good. But be patient.

"Henri, the school is an epitome of the world; and that is why I have sent you to school. You will have to bear the responsibility of your conduct; you must learn how to make yourself liked, and to vanquish the difficulties which are in the way of a boy of your age.

"Finally, my dear Henri, you are expected to form habits of study. If you grow to love it you will avoid many faults, and you will by this good quality repair even those faults which you may commit.

"Your mother has written to me how good you were to her before you left home. I know what a generous resolution, what manly self control you evinced in parting with her. It is well, Henri. You understand now that a son ought to try and spare the tenderness of his mother all the pain he possibly can. I am well satisfied with you, dear child. Talk a great deal to your mother when she goes to see you. Tell her about your studies, about your translations, and your compositions; tell her of your little

troubles, and of your pleasures also ; tell her everything. It is the surest way to render her happy, and to prove to her how much you love her. It is useless to recommend Marguerite to your affection ; your love for her will grow with your growth. As for Xavier, you long ago constituted yourself his protector.

“ We have handsome ponies here. The other day it seemed to me that I could almost see you on one, a fine black one that galloped past my window, insomuch that I have taken into my head not to return to France without bringing my dear Henri a beautiful little pony. What do you say ? One of my soldiers found a little dog in the desert the other day. We mean to raise her for you. She is of a pinkish white color, and has a black spot on her nose. She is a queer little beast and you will have fine sport with her. I haven’t named her, because I thought that you would like to choose a name for her yourself.

“ When the dates are gathered, I will send you a good supply of them ; and I hope Catherine won’t mistake the leather bottle in which they are stored for a fitch of bacon, as she did once before. You must look out for that.

“ Don’t be uneasy about me. We live here on very good terms with the Arabs. Moreover they wouldn’t dare to attack your papa and his soldiers. Be calm. Good-by, my dear little boy. I shall find you greatly grown, even if I should only be away for a year, but I shall not the less

for that press you to my heart, when I see you again, just as tenderly as I did on parting with you. Pray to God for me, my dear Riri, and embrace your mother and your sister for me.

“YOUR PAPA.”

And I also embrace the reader, begging him not to forget his little friend —

HENRI.



